

# VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

MARCH 1992

ONE DOLLAR



# Editor's Note

There's a lovely yellow house in Broadway, Virginia that is very old and very haunted. A pretty lady lived there, quite contented with the slamming cupboards in the night, the mysterious *clomp, clomp* of footsteps down the hall, and even the saucy humor of the spirit who dropped a buffalo head nickel onto the bathroom floor while she was taking a bath. Today, however, another couple lives there, tormented by a ghost who tickles the ears of guests in the middle of the night, and terrorizes the woman of the house with high-pitched screams of agony. The present owners of the house are not, it seems, beloved of its otherworld caretakers.

I'm sure there are hundreds such haunts about Virginia, where ghosts play with the mortals who dare to call their homeplaces home, spooking 'em out of the place if they don't like them, or making life a bit more comfortable for the favored. I like to believe that we have so many ghost stories to tell in Virginia because there was a time when we left so much life and spirit in one place that we could never bear to desert it; a time when one piece of land soaked up the spirits of whole generations, and a people and a place were inseparable.

Today, however, it seems we live like gypsies. We flit from house to house every five to seven years, intent on making money to store up on each sale and purchase. We are constantly on the move, never chancing to leave our spirits in any one place, for fear, perhaps, that something better might come along. And when we do finally settle in, it's often too late to get to know a place. Our legs are too stiff to walk the land from dawn to nightfall, our

eyesight too dim to take note of the details that would have charmed us as children. We're too grown up to spend a summer afternoon lying on our backs in a meadow gazing up at the clouds, slapping at gnats and chewing on stems of grass. We don't have enough time left to seep into the land.

Perhaps, like a friend of mine believes, we don't live anywhere long enough to leave a place haunted anymore.

I, myself, am not looking forward to being left without a haunt. I've always thought it wonderful that the one sure thing you can look forward to in the afterlife is being able to take earthly matters into your own hands. Just think how fun it would be to act like the ghost I've heard of in Cumberland County, who first took to dumping clothes from the closets out on the floor until he came to appreciate the restoration the new homeowners were doing to his house. Now, the "Colonel" as he's affectionately called, makes beds and unlocks the door for the lady of the house when she comes home in the evenings.

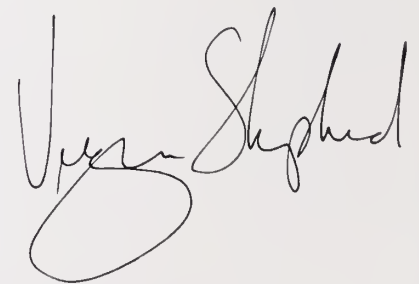
And, just think of the terror you could strike into the selfish heart of some oaf who took to ripping up your land and dumping trash into the stream where you once loved to fish. With a few good screams and chain rattling, you'd succeed in running him off your homeplace. Heck, with a proper fright, you might even scare him into thinking about the state of his immortal soul.

Yes, I think it's time to be giving some serious thought to what it's going to take to become a good and powerful spirit. It's too wonderful an opportunity to pass up. Besides, we could use a few good spirits to

put a good scare into us. It might be a good thing to wake up in the middle of the night to the specter of some mean, cantankerous man or woman shaking a wizened, old finger at us. A few good, old-fashioned ghosts who left their souls behind in the land might spook us into becoming decent people once more, by teaching us to mind our manners, to respect our elders, and be more gentle to the land.

But, I bet it takes more than a little time to become a spirit worthy of taking care of the land. I'd like to believe that you have to prove yourself first, by taking the time to put your heart and soul into a piece of land, and not dismissing it as a simple commodity to be exchanged, altered, or ruined in order to move onto something better or brighter on down the road. And, I'd like to believe that nobody ever got the privilege to do some serious good in the otherworld without devoting some time to doing good in this world first.

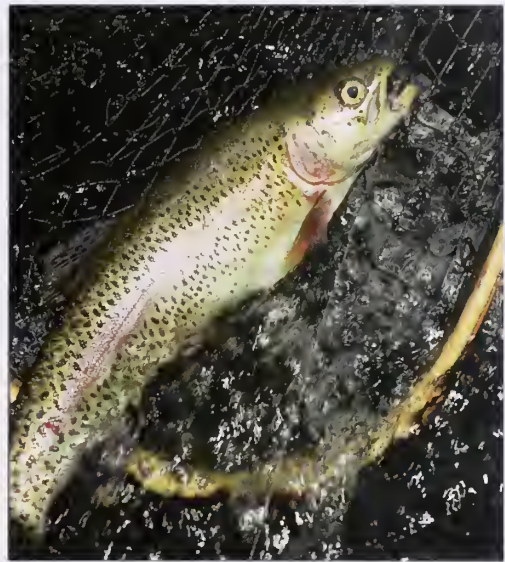
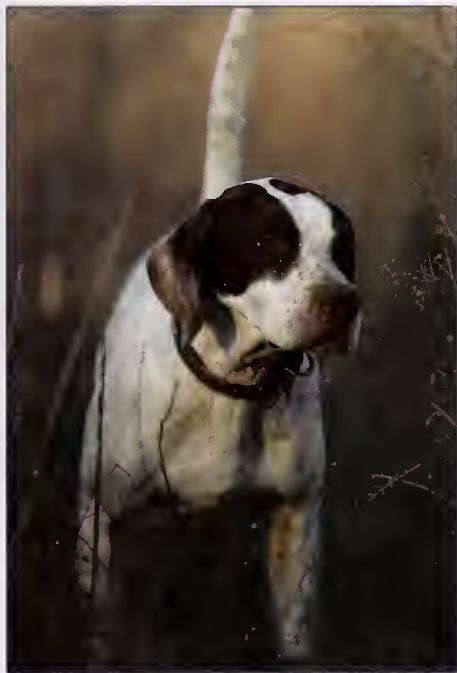
Of course, I might be all wrong about this. I'm sure there are plenty of frightful spooks out there in places I wouldn't want to be caught dead in once darkness falls. But, on the other hand, can you blame me for wanting to believe that you never really have to abandon a place you love?





1992  
Trout Guide  
and  
Trout  
Stocking Plan  
Inside!

# VIRGINIA WILDLIFE



Rainbow trout; photo by Doug Stamm.

**Cover:** Field trial English pointer "East Coast Bandit," owned by Larry White; photo by Lynda Richardson. See p. 4 for tips from professional trainer Delmar Smith on gun dog training.

**Back Cover:** American goldfinch; photo by Jack R. Colbert.

## Features

- 4 **A Dog's Guardian Angel** by Virginia Shepherd  
For the past five years, the legendary pointing dog trainer Delmar Smith has been traveling to Virginia to teach people how to be their dog's best hunting partner.
- 9 **Getting Your Feet Wet—In The Sport of Trout Fishing** by Bob Gooch  
Want to learn the basics of fishing the Commonwealth's trout streams? Read on.
- 13 **1992 Trout Guide**  
Here's all the information you'll need, including regional maps and descriptive information on the streams, lakes, and rivers in our trout program.
- 25 **1992 Trout Stocking Plan**
- 32 **Virginia's Wildlife—** The Glossy Crayfish Snake by Joseph C. Mitchell

## March Journal

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| 27 News    | 29 Photo Tips |
| 28 Recipes | 30 Safety     |

*Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Natural Resources*



# A Dog's Guardian Angel

By  
Virginia Shepherd

*For the past five years, the legendary pointing dog trainer Delmar Smith has been traveling to Virginia to teach people how to be their dog's best hunting partner.*

**"I**f you go out and run a dog, your time is just as well spent under a shade tree," said the smiling, six-foot tall man from Oklahoma. "But if you go out with it fixed in your mind that you're going out to train your dog, then you'll get somethin' done."

The legendary bird dog trainer Delmar Smith grinned at us—a motley collection of men and women in cowboy hats, baseball hats, Oxford shirts, pinstripes, and Wellington

boots accompanied by highly prized vizslas, English pointers, English setters, Brittanys, German short-haired pointers, and weimaraners howling and tugging at their leashes—and we wondered if we were up to the job at hand.

We wanted to believe that we could train our gun dogs. The books told us it was possible, but most of us had already failed. We had gotten our high-dollar puppies to point a quail wing, but beyond that—well,





let's just say our dogs looked well-bred and well-trained as long as you caught them when they were napping. We'd about gotten to the point where we were beginning to believe that bird dog training really was one of those highly occult arts; with special words and incantations spoken that would make a dog lock up on a point, and voodoo that only the professional dog trainers had gained secretly and at great expense.

Then, along came this Delmar Smith three-day pointing dog training seminar. Dave Pomfret, a gun dog trainer himself who runs Oakland Shooting Preserve in Orange County, told me about it one afternoon after he had tactfully commented that my young Brittany pup seemed to be "hunting for himself." What he probably wanted to say was that the pride of my life was running wild, flash pointing birds behind me, bumping birds, and being a general nuisance. There was a look in Dave's eye that plainly said either I should get the mutt trained or leave him at home.

My pride was a bit hurt, I must say, but it needn't have been. In fact, some of the other people who showed up at the seminar had already sent their dogs to trainers, and then successfully messed them up again once they got home. We were all desperate for help from a real "pro."

Most people who know anything about bird dogs, field trials or dog training have heard of Delmar Smith. That's partly because he's been training dogs and winning the biggest stakes in the country for over 50 years with pointers, setters, and Brittanies. He's one of the "old-timers" who field trialed at the old Hawfield place in Orange County with other Southern gentlemen. You

*Delmar Smith (left; photo by Brenda Morgan) has been training and winning stakes all across the country with pointing dogs for over 50 years, and he now conducts seminars to show gun dog owners what he's learned about dog training. Above left: Brittany on point with another backing; photo by Lynda Richardson.*

can't meet the 60-odd-year-old cowboy with a soft Oklahoma drawl without deciding right there and then that you want to grow up to be exactly like him.

Like any good trainer, Delmar tried to sweet-talk us at first. He tried to make us feel good about ourselves by telling us with a straight face that training dogs is no big deal. He told us right off that it's all pretty simple, as long as we started thinking in the proper manner, and started using the right techniques. In fact, he told us that a championship field trial dog is only 10% genes. The rest is training. Here was a man who believed that training a bird dog is no great mystery.

Did we believe him? You've got to be kidding. Most of us knew better ("Just you wait, ol' Delmar, buddy, 'till you try to train *my* dog"), but we had paid our money, and we were willing to hear out the good-natured cowboy who had trained some of the best bird dogs in the nation.

So, there we were, sitting nice and proper at the top of a hayfield in Orange County one Saturday morning in May waiting for Delmar to start in, while our dogs, chained up in the shade, were howling and barking.

The first thing we learned was that reading a book on dog training is never as convincing as seeing the real thing with your own eyes, whether it be Delmar's techniques, Ken Roebuck's, Robert Wehle's or Richard Wolter's. Take Delmar's "chain gang," for example. This apparatus is composed of chain of variable length, depending on the number of dogs chained to it. The idea is to hook up a dog next to another dog, and so on down the line, giving them just enough distance apart so that they can't bite each other, and enough length on their chains so that they can lay down and sit up. The chain gang is described in detail in Bill Tarrant's book on Delmar's techniques, *Best Way to Train Your Gun Dog—The Delmar Smith Method*, but to tell you the truth, most of us who see our dogs as family members rather than as four-footed beasts hurriedly skip over those pages which describe



what seems to be an instrument of unnecessary torture. Still, Delmar calmly insisted that every single one of us chain our dogs up to it. So we did.

"If I could have just one piece of equipment to train a dog with," said Delmar, looking at our anxious faces, "I'd rather have the 'chain gang' than anything else."

You could hardly hear Delmar for the screaming, howling, and barking of our well-behaved gun dogs. I guarantee that if Delmar wasn't standing there, talking softly about the technique and what he promised us it would accomplish, half of us would have jumped to unchain our dogs after two minutes. But, that's one thing about taking a lesson in anything. It's pretty embarrassing to just get up and walk out. It's not the same as slamming down a book and turning on the television. So, we squirmed and listened.

"What the chain gang does," explained Delmar, "is to take a dog's escape areas away from him. A dog has three escape areas. The first is to run away, the second is to bite, and the third one is to 'sull up.' On a chain, the dog can't escape—can't run, can't bite, and it even takes the sull out of him if you keep him on it long enough." What Delmar was saying was that even a dog can't pout but for so long.

About 20 minutes later, we believed. We saw with our own eyes that the "chain gang" did what Delmar said it would do. It taught the dogs to put up with training. Delmar says it's like making a kid sit at a desk with his hands folded. Makes 'em ready to learn.

For two days, Delmar put us through the yard and field work that he uses every day in his own training. For those of us familiar with the Tarrant book, we recognized most of the techniques. But, as Bill Tune, who has read the book "at least a half a dozen times," said: "Anytime you read, you interpret based on your experience. And even though you read and think you understand, I came to this seminar and found out that what I thought Delmar said in the book was not what he said at all."

That was another thing we learned from the seminar: that reading a book—any training book—and understanding it are often two different things. Once you see the techniques demonstrated, the book becomes, as Dave Pomfret says, "a terrific reference." But, without the demonstration, a training manual can just as easily become an instrument of frustration.

A lot of folks might think that it would be a whole lot easier to send their new bird dog puppy to a trainer rather than to risk messing up a good dog by struggling through the process themselves. And many trainers, eager to stay in business, will insist that in two to three months, they can have your dog broke and ready to hunt in the fall. But this frustrates Dave Pomfret, who has trained and field trialed vizslas and pointers for 10 years.

"I send a dog back to the owner," says Dave, "and it may happen that



Dave insists that not enough people who own bird dogs know the principles behind training which must be used throughout the dog's life, and that reading a book is not going to give them that knowledge.

"Any dog is going to continue to test you all his life," says Dave, "and

***"Dogs don't lie.  
Only humans do."***

***—Delmar Smith***



*Training a pointing dog for field trials or hunting takes effort, patience, and commitment. But the rewards make it all worthwhile! Just ask field triallers Gary Winall (above) or Larry White (above right) showing off their dogs at an Amelia Wildlife Management Area field trial; photos by Lynda Richardson.*

two months later I'll get a call from the owner telling me that the dog is starting to bump birds or won't retrieve. But what they don't realize is that it's not the dog who needs to be sent back for more training. It's the owner."

you have to be ready for him. A hunting dog's natural tendency is to stalk game, jump on it, kill it, bring it home to its den and eat it. So, throughout a dog's life, he wants to hunt his way, while we've trained him to hunt a whole different way. We've got to constantly remind him of that."

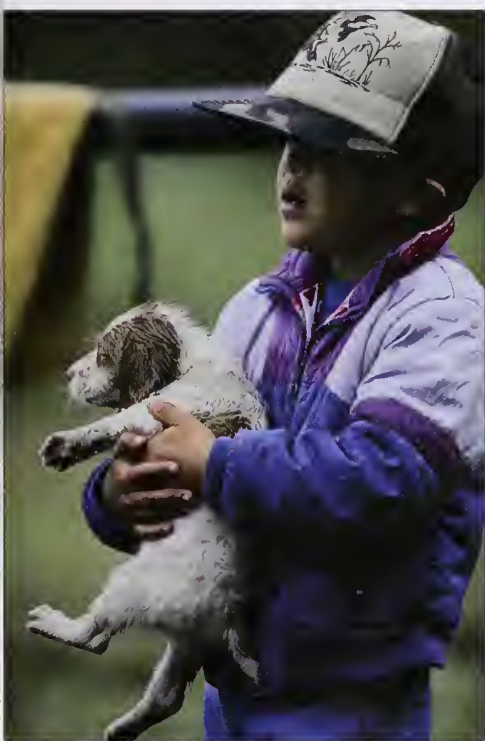
Granted, Delmar taught us techniques that most of us had already heard of or read about. He taught us how to quarter our dogs, how to call them back, how to whoa them, and the force-retrieve. He even showed us how to tie two strings and a hose on a pigeon to work our dogs on, and how to tie an unslippable bolen knot.





*Left: Training a bird dog means you're training him to hunt for you rather than for himself; photo by Rob Simpson.*

*Bottom left: "There's never been a dog born with faults," says Delmar Smith. "The faults are all man-made." Thus, good or bad, the training process starts early; photo by Lynda Richardson.*



But, we also realized that there was a hitch to this dog training thing. We realized it about the time we began to shake our heads in frustration and wail that we just couldn't figure out what we were doing wrong with our dogs when they just stared vacantly at us, not at all sure what it was exactly that we wanted them to do. Delmar showed us that if you want to train a dog, you've got to change your way of thinking. You've got to start thinking like one.

Now, on the surface, that might sound easy enough, but when you get to thinking about it, it's not. In fact, that might be part of the reason why men like Delmar Smith aren't coming out of the woodwork every day and training champion field dogs. You see, the problem is that most of us have trouble enough with day to day thinking. We're hard-pressed enough to see things from another person's point of view, never mind seeing a situation from a dog's way of thinking.

But, sure enough, Delmar Smith's seminar required that you make a stab at dog thinking. You couldn't just follow one of his training techniques like you were follow-

ing some cookbook recipe for the perfect gun dog. That's because every single one of his techniques is based on the way a dog would comprehend the situation. And every dog is different.

"Anytime you get upset at your dog," said Delmar, "your dog has defeated you. Never get mad at your dog. Think it out. Whenever something doesn't work, say to yourself, 'Now what would I do if I were that dog?' Then figure it out."

This attitude comes out of Delmar's basic premise about dogs: "There's never been a dog born with faults. They don't come out of the factory with faults. The faults are all man-made."

It became apparent after two days that everything, every move, every word, every tug on the check cord had to have a purpose. Training a dog, we learned, is not as easy as the books would have liked us to believe. Not only did we have to think about what we were doing to our dogs every second of their training, but we had to do it over and over again.

"Point of contact and repetition," said Delmar. "It's the same with peo-

But, by the end of our first day of training, we were beginning to believe by doing. We were beginning to believe that what Delmar said about anybody being able to train a dog was true.



ple, horses and dogs. Never miss an opportunity to train."

The point was that you had to be training consistently all the time. None of this play stuff or put it off 'till tomorrow. As Delmar said: "It takes a lot of time and effort to go through all the building blocks."

Plus, it seems that there's no end to the "learning how to train" process. Delmar told me that many of the folks who attend his seminars have been there before, and many of them are dog trainers themselves. Delmar himself attends as many dog training seminars as he can. In fact, he joked about the fact that he didn't read training books much—that instead he prefers to watch people and trainers and learn what to do—or what *not* to do.

Delmar may have been right when he said that anybody could train a dog. The question he left up to us was: Were we up to the challenge?

Delmar himself confided in me the fact that most of the people at his seminars would never put in the time and commitment needed to train a dog, but it didn't seem to upset him. Instead, I believe he had another goal in mind.

When I asked Robin Garbardi from Woodbridge if she saw any improvement in her Brittany Jake as a

our dogs who were getting trained at the seminar that weekend. When Delmar grandly presented us each with a certificate of completion on Sunday evening, we laughed when we saw that *our* names were on the certificates, not *our* dogs. But now I understand what that great old dog trainer was doing. All of us had passed the basics of the course; we had listened to the problems, watched the goof-ups, learned the techniques, and tried some of the thinking that it takes to deal with any kind of dog training. Now, it was up to us to pass it on to our dogs.

Because of that seminar, none of us would ever again be able to blame our dogs for anything. Any embarrassing behavior was due to our own limited thinking, our own limited amount of creativity in solving a problem. We realized that our dogs were whatever we chose to make of them.

And, perhaps that's why people like Delmar keep trying their best to train us. They're doing their part to make a hunting dog's life a little bit better. □

*Note: Delmar Smith will be conducting a three-day pointing dog seminar at Oakland Shooting Preserve in Orange County on April 3, 4, and 5. Call 703/854-4540 for details.*



*The training process is never over when you talk about training dogs. "I don't think we get one-tenth out of a dog what he's capable of doing," says professional trainer Delmar Smith. Above: Field trial English setter "Cherokee the Cavalier" owned by "Billy" Kuser poses during a meet in Powhatan; photo by Lynda Richardson.*

result of taking the seminar with her husband Dale, she said, "Actually, I've seen more improvement in my husband Dale and the way he handles Jake."

We came to find out that it wasn't



*Getting Your Feet Wet—*

Rainbow trout; photo by Doug Stamm.



*In The Sport  
of Trout Fishing*

by Bob Gooch

## Want to learn the basics of fishing the Commonwealth's trout streams?

### Read on.

I got the message through a friend. "Ask Bob to do a story in *Virginia Wildlife* magazine telling a warm-water fisherman how to get into trout fishing," was the request. I mulled that one over for awhile.

Was becoming a trout fisherman really that difficult? My thoughts raced back over my own long angling career. I was well into my teens before I caught my first trout. It was not that I wasn't interested. In fact, I could hardly wait to get on a trout stream. But my early years were spent far from good trout fishing country. I nursed that burning desire for a long time.

Still, I couldn't recall any particular difficulty when I edged into that first trout water. Nor did I recall experiencing any problems taking my first trout.

My early angling years had been spent in warm water, on a tiny stream.

... Hey! That was it!

My introduction to trout fishing had been relatively easy because I had spent most of my early years fishing a stream. No, not on a trout stream, but on a tiny warm-water stream where we skinny youngsters fished for branch minnows, catfish, chubs, eels, hornyheads, sunnies, and an occasional bass or pickerel. Mostly by trial and error we had learned the techniques of stream fishing—learned about currents, eddies, back eddies, undercut banks, and all of the other fascinating characteristics of a stream.

Of course I had no trouble making the switch to trout. I had already learned how to read a stream, how to use the currents and eddies to present a bait, and learned how those evasive bigger fish loved the cover of an undercut bank. Make some minor

adjustments for a new kind of fish, and I was ready.

But most youngsters today get their early fishing lessons on flat water—lakes, ponds, or even in salt water. That was it! Sure, switching from flat water to a fast trout stream is a challenge, one that many anglers don't know how to cope with. But it's easy, once you learn a few basics about trout and fast water.

The only trout native to Virginia is the colorful little brookie found mostly today in the tiny mountain streams at the higher elevations. They are fun to fish for, but small and possibly too much of a challenge for the beginner. Hatchery-reared trout—brooks, browns, and rainbows—generally support trout fishing in Virginia. They are stocked mostly at the lower elevations, in streams that are more accessible. I cut my trout angling teeth on such fish and still enjoy them, though I now often fish for the little natives.

While the brook trout is our only native trout, rainbows were introduced to Virginia waters from the western United States, and browns from Europe. The rainbow probably outnumbers the other two in Virginia streams. It's a flashy fish that strikes savagely, leaps frequently, and puts up a spectacular fight. The brook trout rarely leaps, and the hatchery brown seems less inclined to though it does so occasionally. But all are good fish and fun to catch.

All hatchery trout will hit salmon eggs, corn, cheese, and other fake baits, but I find that the brook and brown trout favor natural baits such as minnows and worms. All will hit artificial lures and a great variety of flies. Dry fly enthusiasts love the brown, and I've taken some nice native brookies on dry flies.

It's not likely the newcomer to trout fishing will need much in the way of additional tackle. The same open-face spinning tackle used for panfish such as bluegills and crappie will serve nicely for trout fishing. I use ultralight spinning tackle and 4-pound test line, but heavier medium-weight tackle with a 6-pound test line might be more appropriate for

the beginner. Regular panfish hooks and some split-shot sinkers round out the basic tackle needs. Panfish lures will also take trout.

One item of clothing is essential for successful stream fishing, and I wouldn't begin trout fishing without it. That's a pair of hip boots or waders. I prefer chest waders, as they allow you to fish deeper water in comfort. Icy water spilling over the tops of hip boots can create plenty of discomfort on a cold spring day. Hip boots are less expensive than chest waders, however, and many experienced anglers wear them. Thousands of bank fishermen catch trout, but they are seriously handicapped, being limited to parts of a stream that are accessible from the shore.

The next question on the mind of the beginning trout angler could well be where to go. Virginia trout country begins along the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains and runs west to the Kentucky and West Virginia borders. You are never far from a trout stream anywhere in this big chunk of the Old Dominion. There you will find approximately 200 trout streams that are stocked annually by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Two hundred trout streams? So how are you expected to settle on a particular one?

That's easy. Just go to the one nearest your home—or the most convenient one. Early in the season, at the peak of the stocking season, the streams are equally good. The season opens at 9 a.m. the third Saturday in March. After opening day, fishing hours are 5 a.m. to an hour after sunset.

Some streams are better for brookies, perhaps, and another may be a better brown trout stream, but at this stage of the game you're not too concerned about such refinements. You just want to learn to fish successfully for trout. With that accomplished, your progress as a trout angler will develop rapidly.

The officially designated trout streams are listed elsewhere in this issue of *Virginia Wildlife*. When you arrive on the stream, you can deter-





*Polish up your skills on reading a stream, make sure you've got a pocketful of bait and a light spinning outfit, and you're ready to try trout fishing in the stocked waters of the Old Dominion; photo by Soc Clay.*

mine the stocked section by signs which designate the water as such. Such water is open to public fishing, regardless of the ownership of the adjoining property.

You have the right tackle, plenty of bait or lures, and have selected a stream that is stocked regularly. Now, let's go fishing.

Possibly the very first pool you approach is already lined with anglers—assuming it's opening day. You might want to join them. There are plenty of trout in that pool. Otherwise all of those anglers wouldn't be there. You stand a good chance of

catching your first trout in that pool.

My choice, however, and I suspect I made the same one years ago on that first trout fishing trip, would be to get into the stream. Leave that pool to the crowd, move up the stream a little distance, wade in, and begin fishing.

Work upstream. You can get an argument there, but remember trout, and other stream fish as well, usually rest with their heads into the current. The current brings them food, and they like to position themselves so they can dart forth and snatch it from the current. That means that, except

for eddies, the fish will be facing upstream, and by wading upstream you approach them from the rear. This way you are less likely to spook the fish. By casting upstream you also allow the current to drift the lure or bait on a slack line. This permits a natural drift, the drift the fish are expecting as food moves with the current. You want to take in your line as it moves downstream, however, so you maintain enough control for quick reaction when the fish strikes. It takes a little practice, but is not difficult.

As you move slowly upstream covering all water that might hold a trout, you will find that you are making more quartering casts than those directly upstream. This is good for the simple reason that the drift is easier to control. My favorite cast is across and up the stream—about a 45 degree upstream angle. Preferably I do this from near the bank, but the nature of the stream will dictate your casting position. The water, for example, may be too deep there and you are forced to some other convenient spot. Even a collection of debris may block your move. As you progress up the stream, you will likely move back and forth across it attempting to locate the most advantageous spot from which to work the most productive water.

Learning to read the water will make you a better angler. It's not difficult. Reading a pond or lake is much more of a problem. In a stream, it's mostly a matter of learning the current—where it runs. Debris on the surface of the water will tell you that. It will normally follow the current. If in doubt, toss a handful of dead leaves or twigs on the water and watch where the water takes them. That's the path of the current.

Watch for eddies, spots where the water hits a boulder, for example, and swirls back on itself. The current is reversed temporarily to run back upstream. Make sure you adjust your fishing accordingly. Here the trout will likely be facing downstream—into the current of the back eddie.





*The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries stocks about 600 miles of water with trout each year. That means there is plenty of opportunity to catch a trout this year. All you have to do is to learn a few basics and hit the water! Photo by Soc Clay.*

Also watch for obstacles that break the current. A good example is a midstream boulder, part of which is above the surface. This is an ideal place for a trout to hang out. The fish can rest in the quiet water below the boulder and watch the passing current for food. A lure dropped a few feet above the boulder and allowed to sweep past it will often draw a solid strike.

Undercut banks are not always easy to detect, but they occur where the contour of the stream throws the current against the bank. Over a period of time, the stream carves out a deep cut beneath the bank. If you spot a place where the current disappears beneath the bank, you have an undercut bank. This is an ideal place for a big trout to hang out. The problem is getting the lure to the fish. Hopefully, a lure or bait dropped in the current and allowed to drift with it will be carried into the dark water beneath the bank. If it works, the chances are high a good trout will take it.

If you have ever fished for smallmouth bass in a small stream, you will find many of the techniques that took the scrappy bronzesbacks will also take trout. In fact, I've taken quite a few smallmouth bass while fishing for trout in the Tye and other rivers that hold a mixture of the two fish.

Just about any warm-water stream where there is fast water in the form of rapids, riffles, or just strong currents will teach you many of the techniques of fishing for stream trout. Maybe there's one near your home. If so, pull on your new hip boots or chest waders and begin fishing for whatever the stream holds. In the process, you will also be training for trout fishing.

When fishing small, clear streams, you might find the trout are very spooky, even when approached from downstream. To overcome this, dress in clothing of subdued colors (camouflage is good) and use all the cover you can find. This might mean hugging the bank and casting from

behind boulders or bank vegetation. I've done it often on tiny native brook trout streams. If I hadn't, I wouldn't have caught many fish.

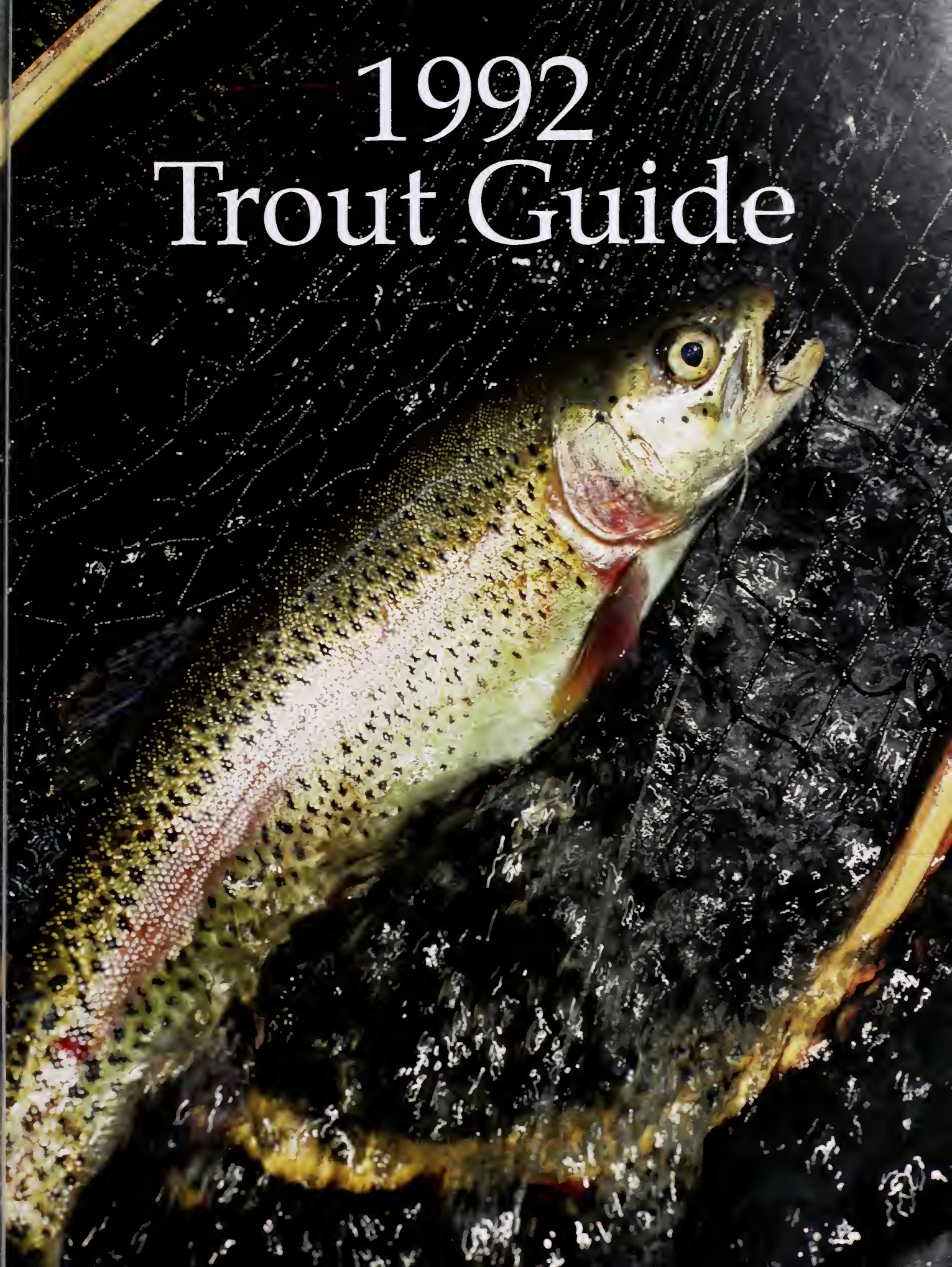
Trout do not usually strike timidly, though brook trout may take natural baits somewhat softly. Generally, you have no trouble detecting a strike. I find that strikes often come when the bait or lure begins to sweep out of the current as the angler's line tightens at the end of a drift. It's a good time to expect a strike. Apparently, the fish thinks the morsel is about to escape the current and make a getaway.

Lakes and ponds? Sure there are some good ones in Virginia that hold trout. Lake Moomaw, for example, is an excellent brown trout lake. But that brings us back to where we began—fishing flat water. And fishing trout streams is an entirely different game. □

*Bob Gooch is an outdoor newspaper columnist and author of several books on hunting and fishing. He lives in Troy, near Charlottesville.*



# 1992 Trout Guide





# Introduction

Virginia contains over 2,700 miles of trout streams in addition to numerous ponds, small lakes and reservoirs. The total includes over 2,100 miles of wild trout streams and about 600 miles of water inhabited with stocked trout. Virginia's diversified trout habitat offers a wide range of trout fishing opportunities.

Virginia's warm climate and topography generally limit trout habitat to the western portion of the state. The Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains provide the elevation to maintain low water temperatures year-round, while the valley between these ranges contains the unique limestone formations necessary to produce highly productive spring creeks.

Trout management in Virginia consists of three basic programs. The put-and-take stocking program is the best known and most popular. Such waters are periodically stocked with catchable size trout. See the *Trout Stocking Plan* following this guide for a complete listing of the streams and lakes stocked and their stocking schedule. All stocked waters are featured on the five maps in this guide.

The wild trout program includes the management of reproducing populations of brook, rainbow and brown trout. Efforts are directed primarily at habitat preservation and proper regulation for protection of spawning stocks.

The put-n-grow-n-take program involves sublegal trout stockings. This relatively small program is rapidly growing in size and popularity due to the high quality trout fishing provided.

Trout season in Virginia is open from the third Saturday in March through February 1. Fishing success for wild and stocked trout is best from April through mid-June. After this period, warm weather and normally low flow conditions make fishing more difficult. The dedicated fisherman, however, can find good

trout fishing opportunities throughout the year.

In 1975, the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries initiated a project to survey the entire trout region of the state. The purpose of this survey was to fully identify the trout resource in order to provide habitat protection, insure that proper regulations have been implemented, and offer the best stocking program possible. The result of this survey was the discovery of a fine wild trout resource, implementation of new statewide trout regulations, and greater diversification of Virginia's trout fishing opportunities.

## Fee Fishing Areas

The fee fishing areas offer put-n-take trout fishing with the added advantage that trout are stocked several times weekly throughout the season. The fee fishing program operates from the first Saturday in April through Labor Day, during which time a daily permit is required in addition to a valid state fishing license. A trout license is not required during this period. After Labor Day, regulations at the fee areas revert to general trout regulations and a trout license is required. The creel limit at these areas is five fish per day at all times.

### Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area:

The Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area is located in southwest Virginia, about 7 miles west of Saltville. The area consists of the 330-acre Laurel Bed Lake and approximately seven miles of Big Tumbling Creek and its two major tributaries, Briery Cove Creek and Laurel Bed Creek. Big Tumbling Creek is a large, steep gradient stream with numerous small waterfalls and large, deep rocky pools. The two tributaries are much smaller with a more moderate gradient. The lake provides a put-n-grow-n-take trout fishery and is used to regulate summer flow in the streams. Trout are stocked daily throughout the fee period in the

streams and fishing must cease at 7:00 p.m. to allow for restocking. Camping is available at the area and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries owns and manages the surrounding land.

### Crooked Creek Fee Fishing Area

Crooked Creek is located in Carroll County, five miles east of Galax. The area consists of five miles of stream which is stocked daily. In addition, approximately two miles of stream are managed as a wild trout fishery. Crooked Creek is a wide, fairly low gradient stream with a gravel bottom. Surrounding land is mixed fields and woodlots not characteristic of the more common mountain stream drainages. As at the Clinch Mountain Area, fishing must cease at 7:00 p.m. to allow for restocking. No facilities are available at Crooked Creek for camping but private facilities are available nearby.

### Douthat Lake Fee Fishing Area

Douthat Lake is a 60-acre state park impoundment located north of Clifton Forge. The lake provides fishing for bass, bluegill, pickerel and catfish in addition to trout which are stocked twice weekly. The lake and surrounding areas are administered by Virginia Division of Parks. Available recreation includes camping, hiking and swimming in addition to fishing. Cabins are also available for rent if application is made well in advance. The lake is located in a mountain setting with most of the surrounding land within the George Washington National Forest.

## Trout Lakes

The warm summer climate of Virginia limits the potential for development of good trout populations in lakes. Numerous small ponds and lakes are stocked in the spring under the put-n-take program. However, very few provide good year-round trout habitat for management of wild or put-n-grow trout fisheries. In order to provide adequate coldwater habitat in Virginia, a lake must either be located at high elevations where cool summer temperatures prevail or be deep



enough to maintain a cold layer of water. Virginia has five small lakes at sufficient elevation for trout and two reservoirs deep enough to provide a two-story fishery. These two story reservoirs stratify during summer months, providing an upper, warm-water layer where fish such as bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish exist and a deep, cold-water layer suitable for trout.

### **Laurel Bed Lake (Russell County)**

Laurel Bed Lake is a 330-acre, mountaintop impoundment located approximately 10 miles northwest of Saltville. The lake is included in the Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area and, in addition to providing a unique fishery, is used to augment flow to Big Tumbling Creek during summer months. The lake is open to fishing from the opening day of trout season until November 1, with a creel limit of five fish per day. As with the remaining sections of the fee fishing area, a daily permit is required in addition to a state fishing license. The fishery has been based almost entirely on brook trout in past years. Fingerling or subcatchable brook trout are stocked in November or December. The trout are usually in the eight to 10-inch size range by opening day with occasional holdover fish of up to two pounds. These fish are fat, with pink flesh, a coloration usually associated with fish from northern states and Canada. Fishing is usually excellent through May with limits of trout being common. Favored fishing methods include nightcrawlers, meal worms, flies and spinners. Minnows are not allowed at the lake in order to prevent introduction of other fish species. Fishing usually becomes sporadic as the lake temperature increases with fish hitting well for a few days, then slacking off for several days. Favorite summer fishing spots are located around coves where spring branches feed in. Late summer and early fall fishing is dependent on the number of fish that survive through the summer, and changes significantly from year to year. Limited camping is permitted on the management area and a concession is in operation.

### **Lexington City Reservoir**

The Lexington City Reservoir is a Lexington Water Supply Reservoir of 22 acres. It is a put-n-grow lake that is stocked annually with brook trout. They have been stocked for the past four or five years and grow naturally to catchable size. The brookies have done well in the reservoir and many measure nine to 13 inches in length.

It is a half mile hike to the reservoir and primitive camping is permitted. General fishing regulations are in effect and no trout stamp is required. A daily permit is required and is available from the Lexington Recreation Department (703) 463-9525. Take Route 251 from Lexington to Route 612. The access road is off Route 612 at Oakdale.

### **Mills Creek and Coles Run Reservoirs**

Mills Creek (17 acres) and Coles Run (13 acres) are located in the Pedlar Ranger District of the George Washington National Forest. They are both old Augusta County Water Supply Reservoirs that were first opened to fishing in 1990.

The lakes are managed as put-n-grow lakes and are stocked annually with small brook trout. Samples collected in fall of 1990 show good populations of 10 to 12-inch brook trout.

There are no facilities and access by foot is about a half mile to Coles Run and 1 1/2 miles to Mills Creek. For more information, call the Pedlar Ranger District in Buena Vista at (703) 261-6105. Access is west of Route 664 at Sherando off of Forest Road 42.

### **Skidmore Lake (Switzer Dam)**

Skidmore Lake is a 104-acre impoundment located off of Route 33 west of Harrisonburg. The dam was built by the Soil Conservation Service for flood control and water supply, and is now managed by the City of Harrisonburg. An access road is available off of Route 33. Boats, without motors, are permitted but must be carried to the water as no ramp is provided. Fingerling brook trout have been stocked since 1976 and fishing has been permitted since 1979. Fisherman success has been

good with most fish in the 8 to 14-inch range. In addition, occasional large brook trout of 2 to 3 pounds have been taken. No camping is permitted at the lake but primitive camping is available in the National Forest nearby.

### **Lake Moomaw**

This flood control reservoir was completed in 1981 with the closing of the Gathright Dam on the Jackson River. It resulted in the formation of a 12-mile long, 2,530 acre reservoir with more than 43 miles of shoreline.

Much of the shoreline is adjacent to the 13,428-acre Gathright Wildlife Management Area which is owned and managed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The average depth of the lake is 80 feet and flow augmentation results in a normal five to 15-foot drawdown by late summer.

Trout management at the reservoir consists of stocking subcatchable brown trout and McConaughy strain of rainbow trout.

Brown trout fishing has been good in recent years, with the 89-90 stockings showing a resurgence in good trout fishing in the lake. Brown trout of 2 to 3 pounds should be numerous in 1992. Plus, VDGIF is conducting a study to provide biologists with information to further improve the brown trout fishery in Moomaw.

McConaughy strain rainbow trout are doing very well also. Most trout are caught by trolling with shad imitation crankbaits, some are caught still fishing with live shad 25 feet down and others by jump fishing. Some are caught incidental to bass fishing.

The area around Moomaw provides nearly year-round opportunities for boating water sports, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, birding, sight-seeing, photography and hunting.

Boats are restricted to a maximum length of 25 feet. No house boats are allowed and excessive noise is prohibited. Trailer launched boats must be launched at ramps at Fortney Branch or Bolar Flat. Canoes and cartops can be launched at Coles Mountain Fishing Access, McClintock Bridge, McClintock Point and Midway.



*Opposite and right: Rainbow trout, a favorite of anglers who love to fish the Old Dominion's stocked trout waters; photos by Doug Stamm.*

The lake is open 24 hours a day, year-round. There is a 12-inch size limit on bass and 10 inches on trout (5 per day). Neither trout nor forest stamp is required.

The Bolar Mountain Recreation Area provides camping, swimming beaches, restrooms and picnic grounds. Bolar Flat has a picnic area, a four-lane boat dock and a courtesy dock and restrooms. There are primitive camping areas at Greenwood and McClintock Point. The Morris Hill Campground and picnic area; the four-lane Fortney Branch ramp and courtesy dock and the Coles Mountain Area are located on the south end of the lake in Alleghany County. A daily fee is charged for swimming, picnicking and camping.

For facilities information, contact the James River Ranger District in Covington (703) 962-2214; the Warm Springs Ranger District in Hot Springs (703) 839-2521; or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Covington (703) 962-1138.

### **Philpott Reservoir**

Philpott Lake is a 2,880-acre reservoir located west of Martinsville. Warmwater fishing is the major attraction, but trout are also stocked annually. Stockings generally consist of 8 to 9-inch McConaughy rainbow trout released in the fall of the year. Fishing success has been highly variable, probably due to the varying size of the summer coldwater habitat available. Trout can be caught throughout the lake during spring, fall and winter, but during summer months most successful fishermen fish deep at night. Philpott generally produces some of the larger rainbow trout taken each year with catches up to 7 or 8 pounds.



## **Special Regulation Trout Streams**

Special regulation areas provide anglers with the opportunity to catch more and larger trout throughout the fishing season. Restrictions have been applied to certain wild trout waters as well as several types of stocked trout streams, and they include some of the state's best trout water. Check your fish law digest for the specific regulations applying to each area described below.

### **Wild Trout Streams**

In the following streams, regulations require use of single hook artificial lures and all trout less than 9 inches in length be returned to the water unharmed. The exceptions are

the Rapidan River and its tributaries, Stewart's Creek, North Fork Moorman's River and Dan River, which require the release of all fish caught.

### **Buffalo Creek (Amherst County)**

Special regulations apply to that portion of North Fork of Buffalo Creek and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest. Access is available by forest trail off of Forest Road 51 or from the end of State Route 635. Buffalo Creek is a moderate to high gradient stream dominated by large boulders and deep pools. The stream contains a good native brook trout population with numerous fish 8 to 10 inches in length.





### **Conway River/Devils Ditch (Greene County)**

Special regulations apply to that portion of Conway River and its major tributary, Devils Ditch, within the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The stream contains brook trout in the upper reaches with wild brown trout scattered through the lower portions. Adult brook trout range from 7-11 inches in length, brown trout occasionally exceed 20 inches. The stream lies north of Starnardsville and can be reached by Route 615 from Graves Mill. The area adjoins the Shenandoah National Park.

### **Dan River (Patrick County)**

The Dan River in Patrick County from the Pinnacles Powerhouse to Townes Dam is the fourth stream in the state designated as a catch-and-release trout fishery. The Dan River below the Pinnacle Powerhouse (Kibler Valley) remains put-and-take trout water. Reproducing brown trout are the dominant species in the lower reaches of the section, while wild brook trout are found in the upper reaches. This three mile section of the Dan River has been subjected to very low flows for years, however, a new agreement with the City of Danville will result in greatly

improved flows beginning in 1992-93. The special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 8 south of Stuart to Route 103 west, turn right on Route 648 at Claudeville and proceed to the powerhouse. In addition, the section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn left on Route 602 from Route 614 and proceed to Townes Dam. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge at the Pinnacles Powerhouse or from the City Utilities Department.

### **Little Stony Creek (Giles County)**

Special regulations apply to that portion of Little Stony Creek in the Jefferson National Forest. Most of the special section is below the Cascades waterfall. The upper reaches of Little Stony Creek contain native brook trout, but rainbow trout comprise most of the trout population below the Cascades. Adult rainbows average 7-12 inches in length. The area is heavily used by hikers and picnickers. The stream is located near Pembroke and can be reached by Route 623.

### **Little Stony Creek (Shenandoah County)**

Little Stony Creek is a small mountain brook trout stream. The special regulations apply to that portion of stream above Woodstock Reservoir. Adult brook trout presently average from 7-10 inches in length. The stream is located west of Woodstock and Forest Service Road 92 crosses the lower portion of the special regulation section. Much of the upper reaches can only be reached by foot trail.

### **North Creek (Botetourt County)**

The upper section of the stream (above the first bridge upstream of the North Creek campground) is designated for special regulations while the lower portion remains put-and-take trout water. Rainbow trout predominate, although brook trout are present in the headwater tributaries. Adult trout will range from 7-12 inches. The stream is located east of Buchanan, a short distance from I-

81. The Jefferson National Forest maintains a campground adjacent to the stream and vehicular access is available along most of its length.

### **North Fork Moorman River (Albemarle County)**

The Shenandoah National Park recently designated that portion of the Moorman River within the Park as its second fish-for-fun stream. The stream contains an excellent population of brook trout with numerous adults of 8 to 12 inches. In addition, a small population of wild brown trout can be found in the lower half of the stream. Moorman River can be reached by State Route 614 past Sugar Hollow Reservoir. A good foot trail parallels the stream from the Park boundary.

### **Ramsey's Draft (Augusta County)**

Ramsey's Draft and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest, became a special regulation trout stream last year. Over 10 miles of fishable water, primarily within the recently created Ramsey's Draft Wilderness Area, provides anglers with an opportunity to catch native brook trout up to 10 inches in length in a remote setting. Late summer stream flows are often quite low, so plan to fish Ramsey's Draft during the springtime. To reach Ramsey's Draft, drive 15 miles west of Churchville on State Route 250 and look for the Mountain Home Picnic Area on the right. A foot trail parallels the stream from the picnic area.

### **Rapidan River (Madison County)**

The Rapidan is our best known special regulation trout stream. The special regulation area includes that portion of the stream within the Shenandoah National Park and the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The stream may be reached by Route 662 from Graves Mill or Route 649 from Criglersville. A dirt road parallels most of the stream but the upper portion is gated. Native brook trout are the dominant species and adult trout range from 7-14 inches in length. Due to the special no creeling regulation, the Rapidan contains many 10-11 inch trout.



### **St. Mary's River (Augusta County)**

The special regulation section includes all portions of the St. Mary's River above the gate at the National Forest boundary. It is a fairly high gradient with a number of waterfalls. Although water levels can get quite low along lower reaches, flows are much improved upstream and large, deep pools provide ample trout cover. Adult brook trout and rainbow trout average 8-12 inches in length. Due to acidification of the stream in recent years, brook trout have replaced rainbows as the dominant trout species. The stream lies east of Raphine off of Route 608 a short distance from I-81. Most of the area is accessible by foot trail only and backpacking is popular.

### **Stewart's Creek (Carroll County)**

Stewart's Creek is another of the catch-and-release trout fisheries in the state. It is a high-gradient native brook trout stream with numerous plunge pools, rock ledges, and a dense rhododendron canopy for cover. Approximately 4.5 miles of Stewart's Creek and its two major tributaries, North Fork and South Fork Stewart's Creek, were opened to the public in 1989 for year-round fishing. Only single hook, artificial lures can be used.

Stewart's Creek Wildlife Management Area is southeast of Galax on the North Carolina side of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Take exit 1 off I-77. Follow the trailblazer signs to the area.

### **Whitetop Laurel/Green Cove Creek (Washington County)**

The special regulation area includes the lower mile of Green Cove Creek plus Whitetop Laurel Creek from the mouth of Green Cove to the first bridge above the village of Taylors Valley. Whitetop Laurel is one of Virginia's largest and most beautiful wild trout streams. Wild rainbow trout dominate, with most adults in the 7-14-inch class. A few wild brown trout provide occasional trophy fish. The special regulation area is located east of Damascus near the Tennessee line and within the Mount Rogers Recreation Area.

### **Shenandoah National Park**

The Park provides an entire region of special regulation trout streams extending from Front Royal to Waynesboro. Regulations require the use of single hook, artificial lures only, and restrict daily creel limits to five fish all of which are eight inches or more. The season is open from the third Saturday in March through October 15th. Most streams within the Park contain good populations of native brook trout, but not all are open to fishing. Some isolated brown trout are also found in the lower reaches of the large, east slope streams.

## *Stocked Trout Streams*

In the following streams, special regulations require the use of single hook, artificial lures and restrict creel to fish over 12 inches in length. Trout from 8-10 inches are stocked periodically and allowed to grow for several months to a year before being creeled. This approach can be used in streams that maintain good flow, cool summer waters and are productive enough for good growth of trout.

### **Jackson River (Bath County)**

The special regulation area of the Jackson River in Bath County is new for 1992. It extends from the USFS swing bridge just above the mouth of Muddy Run, upstream 3.0 miles to the last ford on FS 481D. This section of river had previously been managed as put-n-take. The special regulation area can only be reached by foot travel; either from the Hidden Valley area or off of Route 623 and FS Road 481. This area provides a remote fishing opportunity on a relatively large, productive stream.

### **Smith Creek (Alleghany County)**

The special regulation section extends from the Forest Service boundary above the old C & O dam upstream 2.5 miles to the Clifton Forge Dam. Within this section, subcatchable brown trout are stocked once annually. The stream contains good numbers of 8 to 12-inch brown trout with occasional fish to 20 inches. The stream maintains good flow throughout the year and provides

wide, flat pools and good fly fishing opportunities. The best way to access this stream is by Route 606 from Clifton Forge to the access road for the Clifton Forge Water Plant. Fishermen must park at the entrance and walk a half mile to the stream.

### **Snake Creek (Carroll County)**

Special regulations apply to all of Big Snake Creek below Hull Ford and all of Little Snake Creek below the junction of Routes 922 and 674. The stream is located just north of Fancy Gap. Snake Creek is a moderate gradient, softwater, gravel bottomed stream with an average width of about 18 feet. Holdover of stocked fish is good along with a fair population of native brook trout.

## *Trophy Trout Streams*

Management of a few selected streams as trophy trout water is relatively new to Virginia. Regulations restrict fishing to the use of single hook artificial lures and the creel to 2 fish per day over 16 inches (except for Mossy Creek where the creel is one fish per day over 20 inches). Mossy Creek, Sinking Creek, and Smith Creek, furthermore, are restricted to flyfishing only. The management approach is generally to stock fingerling trout (5-6") in high quality streams where they will grow exceptionally fast.

### **Back Creek (Bath County)**

The rugged mountains that form the backdrop to the Back Creek special regulation area featuring a trophy brown trout fishery is one of the area's most appealing features.

Brown trout fingerlings are stocked annually and the year-round fishery was opened to the public in 1989. Trout growth is outstanding, and angling is restricted to artificial lures with creeling limited to two 16-inch trout daily. A campground, picnic pavilion, outdoor games, and two warm-water lakes for fishing and swimming also can be enjoyed. Take Route 42 west of Warm Springs to Mountain Grove, right on Route 600 for 6 miles to the area.



### **Buffalo Creek (Rockbridge County)**

The special regulation area includes that section of stream from the confluence of Colliers Creek upstream 7.9 miles to the confluence of North and South Forks of Buffalo Creek. The stream flows through private land and requires a written landowner permit to fish. Brown and rainbow trout are stocked annually as subcatchables and good numbers of 10 to 16-inch fish are available. Trophy fish of 5 to 8 pounds have been caught in the stream. Buffalo Creek can be reached by taking Route 251 from Lexington.

### **Dan River (Patrick County)**

The special regulation section is located within the Pinnacles Hydroelectric Project in what is known as the "grand canyon" of Virginia. The terrain is quite rugged and the scenery is spectacular. The section contains approximately six miles of stream and extends from Talbott Dam downstream to the confluence with Townes Reservoir. The fishery is maintained by natural reproduction and consists primarily of rainbow trout in the 8-12 inch size range and brown trout in the 8-18 inch size range. The upper reaches of the special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn right on Route 601 and proceed to Talbott Dam. The lower reach of the section can only be accessed by boat at the upper end of Townes Reservoir. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge from the City Utilities Department or on site at the Pinnacles Powerhouse.

### **Mossy Creek (Augusta County)**

The special section includes about 4 miles of stream extending upstream from the Augusta/Rockingham County line. The stream is located just off of Route 42 south of Bridgewater. Fishing in Mossy Creek is restricted to flyfishing only and a written landowner permit must be obtained. Mossy Creek is a classic, meadow limestone stream averaging about 15 feet in width and flow-

ing through open pastures. Brown trout in the 3 to 7-pound class are available to fishermen.

### **Sinking Creek (Giles and Craig Counties)**

The special section includes that portion of stream in Giles County extending from a cable and Department sign 0.4 miles below the State Route 703 low-water bridge upstream 1.8 miles to a cable and Department sign 0.1 miles above the Reynolds farm covered bridge and from a cable and Department sign 1.0 miles below the State Route 642 bridge upstream to a cable and department sign 0.5 miles above the State Route 642 bridge in Craig County. Brown and rainbow are stocked annually and angling is restricted to fly fishing only. A fishing permit is required to fish this stream. Permits may be obtained at the Department office in Vinton and locally at the Twin Oaks Grocery Store on State Route 42 in Craig County and the Super Value Grocery Store in Newport.

### **Smith Creek (Rockingham County)**

The special section includes approximately 1.5 miles of stream opened in 1989 near Lacy Spring. Smith Creek flows through private farmland and requires a written landowner permit to fish. Brown trout fingerlings are stocked annually in the fall. Good numbers of 10-16 inch trout are available and fish over 4 pounds have been reported. In the fly fishing only stream, only two trout over 16 inches can be creelied daily, and year-round fishing is allowed.

### **Smith River (Henry County)**

The special area includes the posted section extending 3 miles downstream from Towne Creek near the town of Bassett. Smith River is Virginia's most noted trophy trout stream. The current state record, 18 pound 11 ounce brown trout was taken in 1979 and numerous trout exceeding 10 pounds have been caught. Smith River is a large, flat, tailwater stream receiving coldwater discharges from Philpott Dam.

## *Delayed Harvest Trout Streams*

In 1989, the Department initiated a new management program with establishment of Virginia's first "delayed harvest" trout fishery. This program incorporates aspects of both fish-for-fun and put-n-take trout fishing. Catchable sized trout are stocked in the fall, winter and spring. From October 1st through the following May 15th, only single hook artificial lures may be used and all fish must be returned unharmed. From May 16th through September 30th, general trout regulations are in effect and trout may be creelied. This management approach appears to have considerable potential to provide high quality fishing to a large number of fishermen.

### **North River (Augusta County)**

The delayed harvest section of the North River extends from the base of Elkhorn Dam downstream 1.5 miles to the head of Staunton City Reservoir. This is a remote section of stream that can only be reached by foot trail. Access is available by parking at Elkhorn Lake and following the trail along the lake to the spillway. This area provides a remote, scenic fishing opportunity during the winter and spring months. Stream flow in North River is usually low during summer and fall months.

### **South River (Augusta County)**

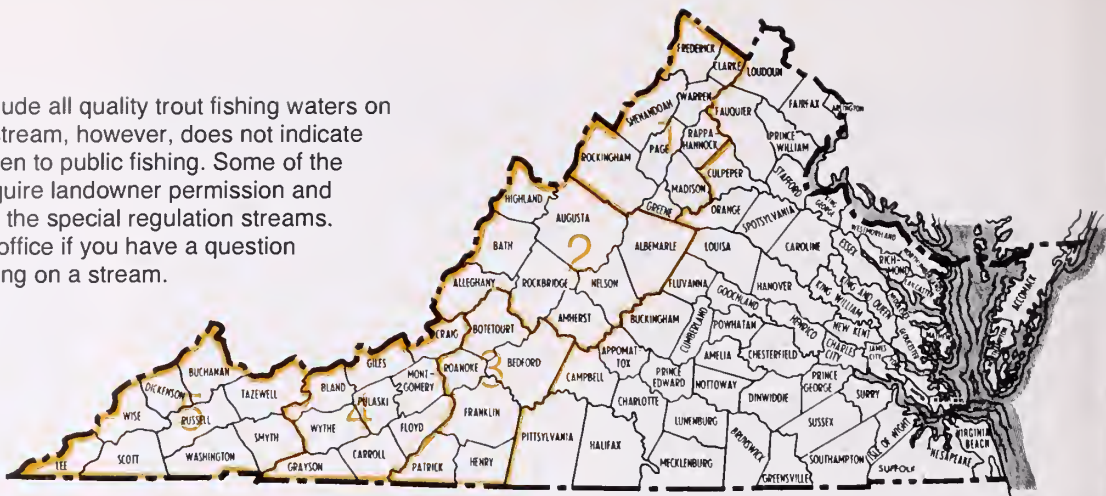
The delayed harvest section extends from the CSX railroad bridge below Broad Street (Route 250) in Waynesboro upstream 2.5 miles through Ridgeview Park. This stream section runs through the city of Waynesboro and is in an urban setting. South River is a relatively large, wide stream with shallow runs and riffles. The stream provides outstanding flyfishing opportunities because of its size and its abundance of aquatic insects. The stream is open to fishing year-round and provides excellent winter fishing.



## Caution:

We have made an effort to include all quality trout fishing waters on these area maps. Inclusion of a stream, however, does not indicate that all or part of the stream is open to public fishing. Some of the native trout streams listed will require landowner permission and additional permits as will a few of the special regulation streams. Please call your district fisheries office if you have a question concerning private vs. public fishing on a stream.

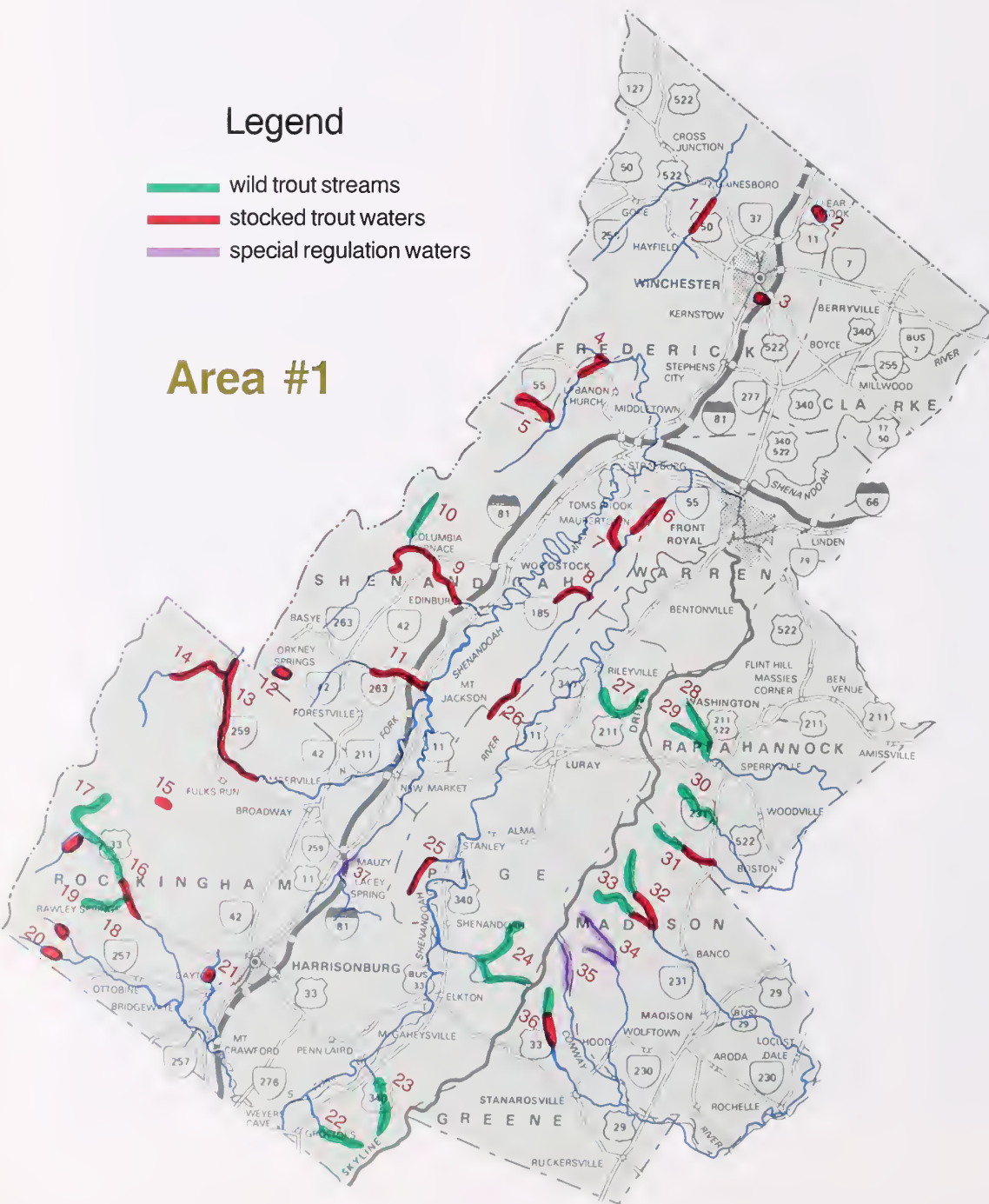
In addition, we have given the **general** location of each stream, but it is essential to obtain a topographical or county map to pinpoint specific locations before you start your fishing trip.



## Legend

- wild trout streams
- stocked trout waters
- special regulation waters

## Area #1



### Frederick County

- (1) Hogue Creek
- (2) Clearbrook Lake
- (3) Winchester Lakes
- (4) Cedar Creek
- (5) Paddy Run

### Shenandoah County

- (6) Passage Creek
- (7) Little Passage Creek
- (8) Peters Mill Creek
- (9) Big Stoney Creek
- (10) Little Stoney Creek
- (11) Mill Creek
- (12) Tomahawk Pond

### Rockingham County

- (13) N. Fk. Shenandoah River
- (14) German River
- (15) Slate Lick Lake
- (16) Dry River
- (17) Switzer Lake
- (18) Blacks Run
- (19) Hone Quarry Lake
- (20) Briery Branch Lake
- (21) Silver Lake
- (22) Madison Run (SNP)
- (23) Big Run (SNP)
- (37) Smith Creek

### Page County

- (24) Naked Creek (SNP)
- (25) Cub Run
- (26) Upper Passage Creek
- (27) Jeremys Run (SNP)

### Rappahannock County

- (28) Piney River (SNP)
- (29) N. Fk. Thornton River (SNP)
- (30) Hazel River (SNP)

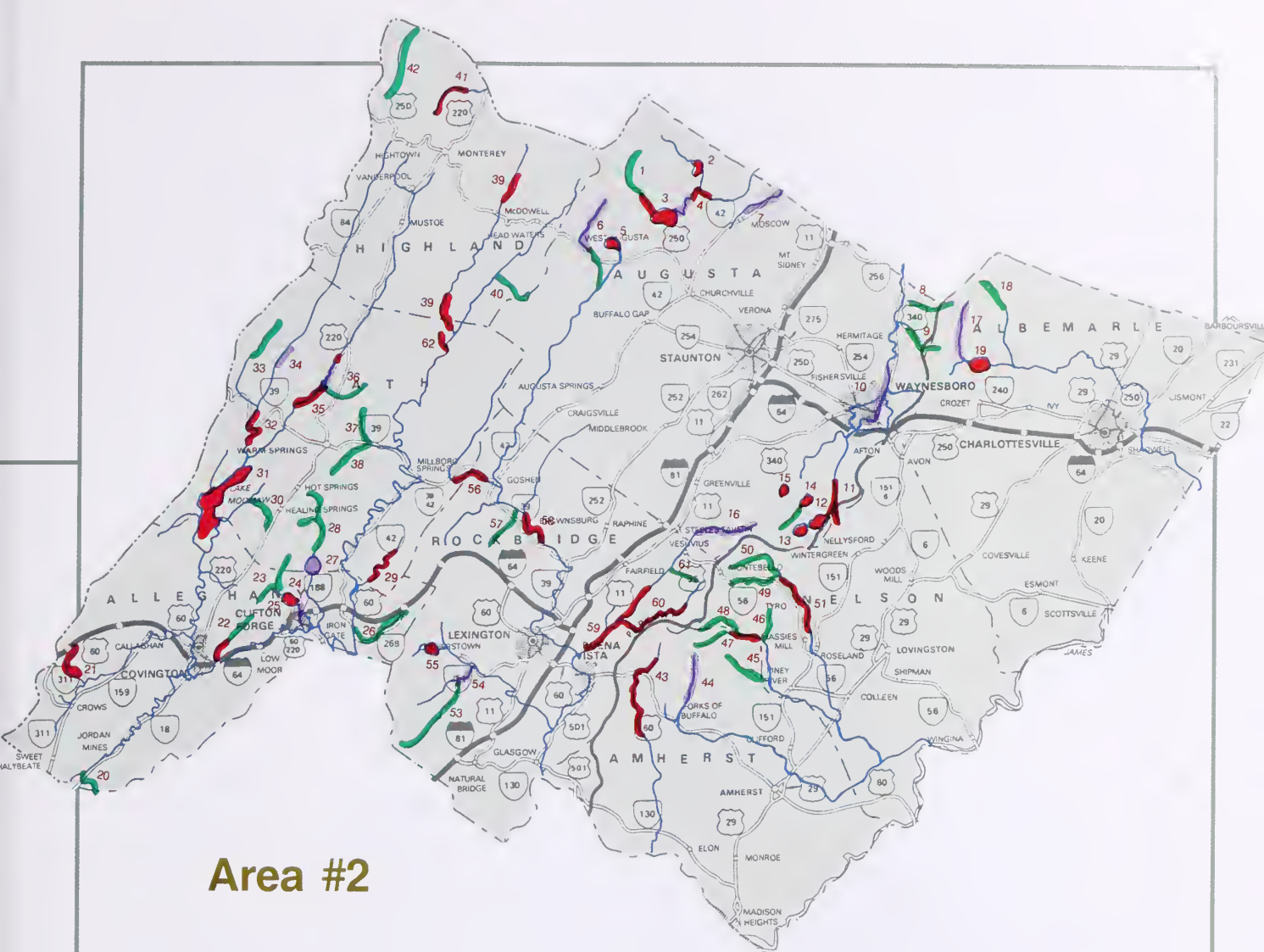
### Madison County

- (31) Hughes Rivers (SNP)
- (32) Robinson River (SNP)
- (33) Rose River (SNP)
- (34) Rapidan River (SNP)

### Greene County

- (35) Conway River
- (36) South River





## Area #2

### Augusta County

- (1) North River
- (2) Hearthstone Lake
- (3) Elkhorn Lake
- (4) North River
- (5) Braley Pond
- (6) Ramseys Draft
- (7) Mossy Creek
- (8) Meadow Run (SNP)
- (9) Paine Run (SNP)
- (10) South River
- (11) Back Creek
- (12) Lower Sherando Lake
- (13) Upper Sherando Lake
- (14) Mills Creek Reservoir
- (15) Coles Run Reservoir
- (16) St. Marys River

### Albemarle County

- (17) N. Fk. Moormans River (SNP)
- (18) Doyles River (SNP)
- (19) Sugar Hollow Reservoir

### Allegheny County

- (20) Shawvers Run
- (21) Jerrys Run

### (22) Pounding Mill Creek

- (23) Smith Creek
- (24) Clifton Forge Reservoir
- (25) Smith Creek
- (26) Simpson Creek

### Bath County

- (27) Douthat Lake
- (28) Wilson Creek
- (29) Pads Creek
- (30) Cascades Creek
- (31) Lake Moomaw
- (32) Back Creek
- (33) Little Back Creek
- (34) Back Creek
- (35) Jackson River
- (36) Muddy Run
- (37) Jordan Run
- (38) Mares Run
- (62) Spring Run

### Highland County

- (39) Bullpasture River
- (40) Benson Run
- (41) S. Fk. Potomac River
- (42) Laurel Fork

### Amherst County

- (43) Pedlar River
- (44) N. Fk. Buffalo River
- (45) Little Piney River
- (47) S. Fk. Piney River
- (48) N. Fk. Piney River

### Nelson County

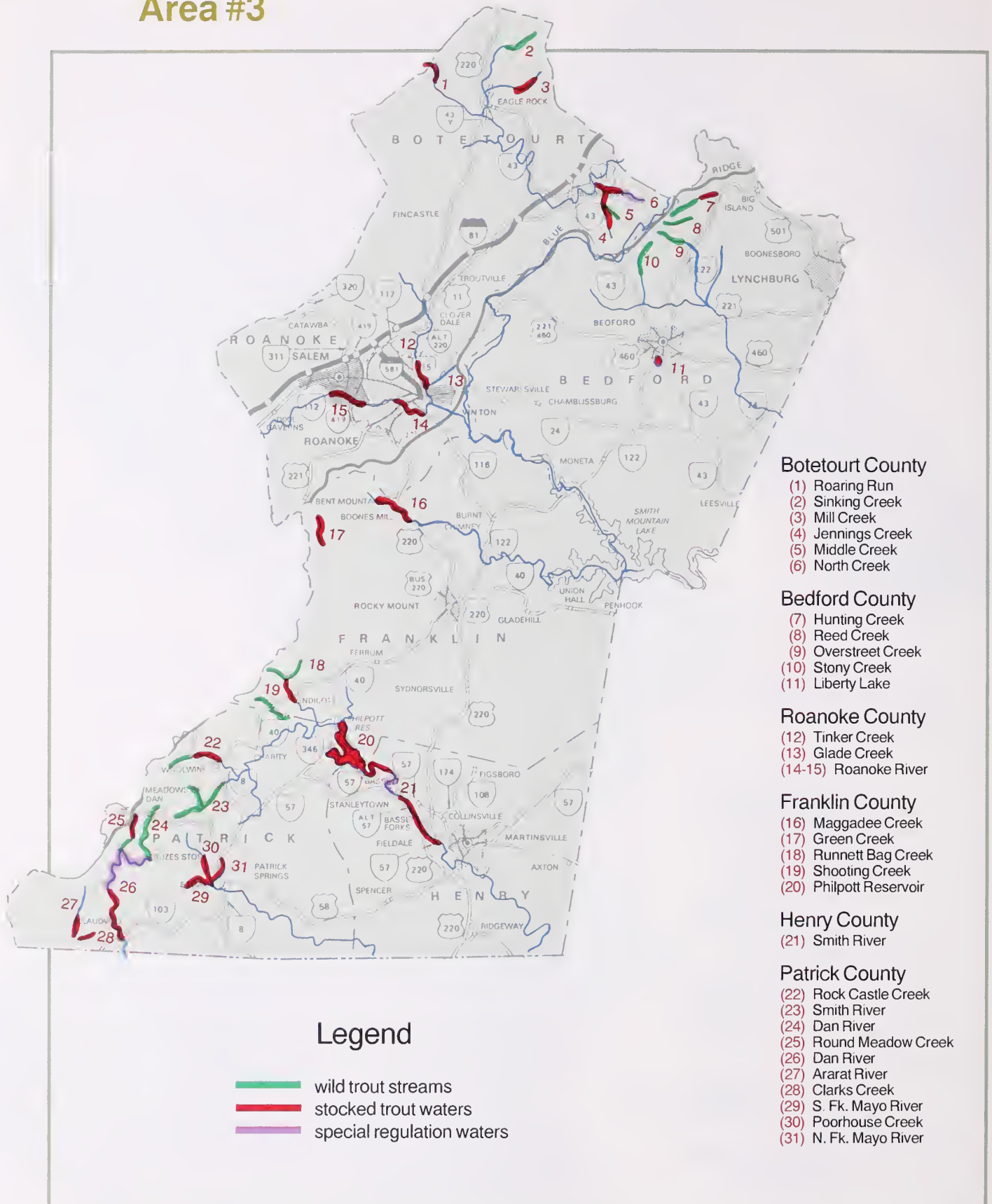
- (46) Shoe Creek
- (49) S. Fk. Tye River
- (50) N. Fk. Tye River
- (51) Tye River

### Rockbridge County

- (53) S. Fk. Buffalo Creek
- (54) Buffalo Creek
- (55) Lexington Reservoir
- (56) Mill Creek
- (57) Guys River
- (58) Maury River
- (59) South River
- (60) Irish Creek
- (61) Big Marys Creek



## Area #3





# Area #4

## Craig County

- (1) Potts Creek
- (2) Barbours Creek
- (3) Meadow Creek
- (4) Sinking Creek

## Giles County

- (5) Big Stony Creek
- (6) Little Stony Creek
- (7) Johns Creek
- (8) Mill Creek
- (9) Dismal Creek

## Montgomery County

- (10) Craigs Creek
- (11) Poverty Creek
- (12) Toms Creek
- (13) S. Fk. Roanoke River

## Floyd County

- (14) Goose Creek
- (15) Little River
- (16) W. Fk. Little River
- (17) Howells Creek

- (18) Mira Fork
- (19) Indian Creek
- (20) Burkes Fork
- (21) Laurel Fork

## Carroll County

- (22) Big Reed Island Creek
- (23) Snake Creek
- (24) Elk Spur Branch
- (25) Stewarts Creek
- (26) Crooked Creek
- (27) Little Reed Island Creek

## Pulaski County

- (28) W. Fk. Peak Creek
- (29) Laurel Fork Creek
- (30) Wolf Creek
- (31) Lick Creek

## Bland County

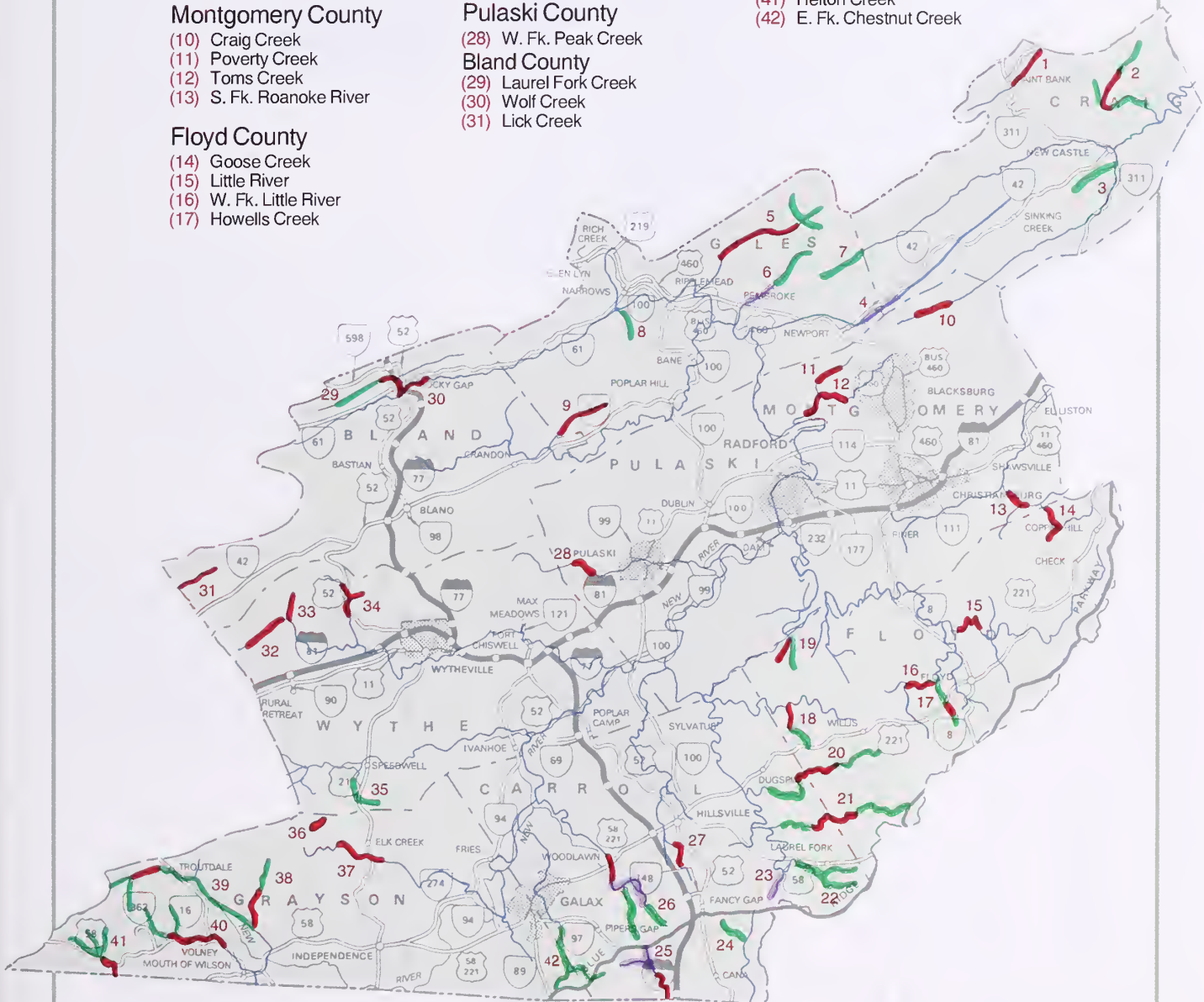
- (29) Laurel Fork Creek
- (30) Wolf Creek
- (31) Lick Creek

## Wythe County

- (32) W. Fk. Reed Creek
- (33) Guillon Fork
- (34) Stony Creek
- (35) Dry Run




## Grayson County

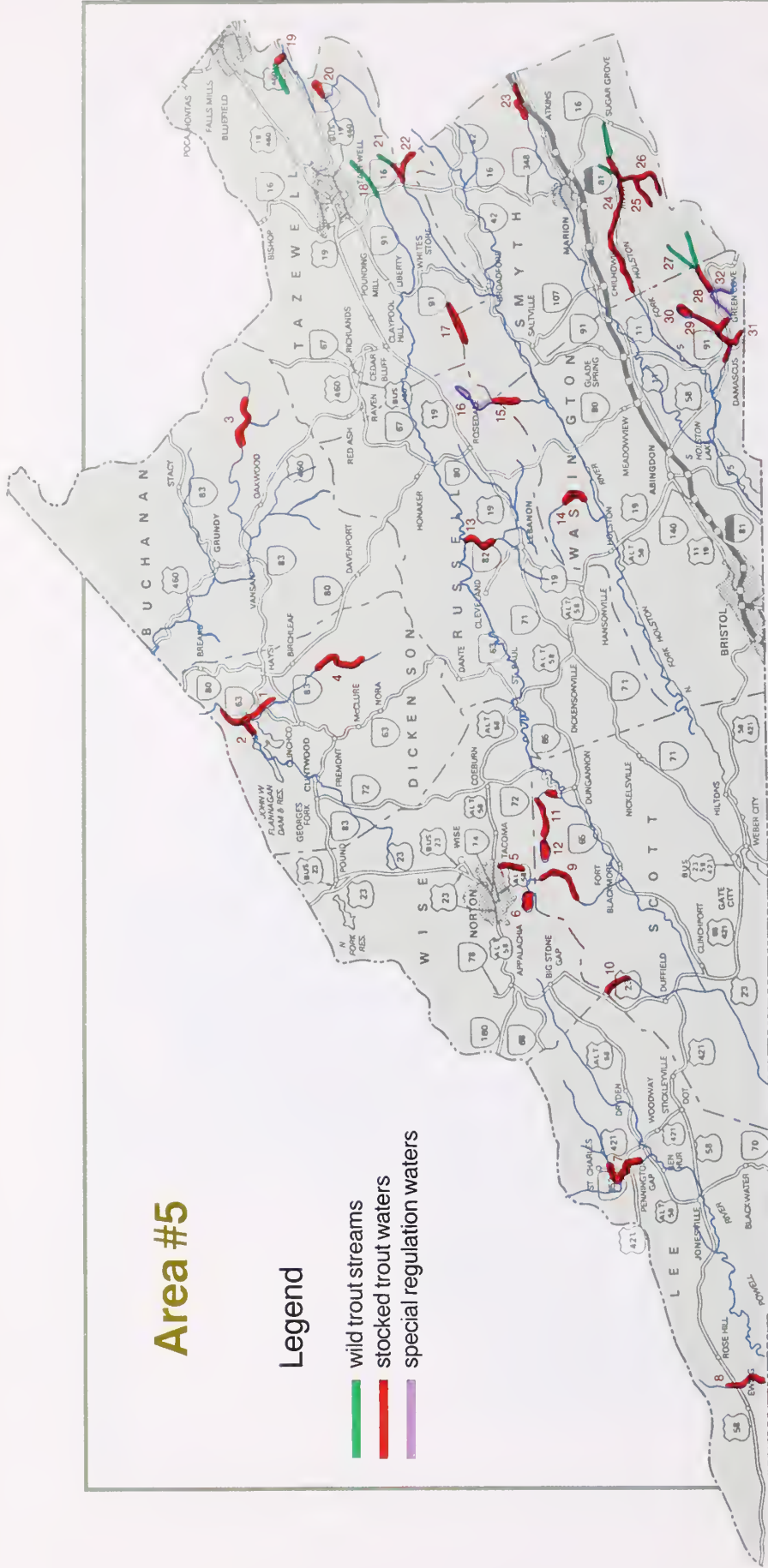
- (36) Hales Lakes
- (37) Elk Creek
- (38) Middle Fox Creek
- (39) Fox Creek
- (40) Big Wilson Creek
- (41) Helton Creek
- (42) E. Fk. Chestnut Creek



## Area #5

### Legend

-  wild trout streams
-  stocked trout waters
-  special regulation waters



### \*Dickenson County

- (1) Russell Fork
- (2) Pound River
- (4) Frying Pan Creek

### Buchanan County

- (3) Dismal River

### Wise County

- (5) Clear Creek
- (6) High Knob Lake

### Lee County

- (7) N. Fk. Powell River
- (8) Martins Creek

### Scott County

- (9) Big Stony Creek
- (10) Stock Creek
- (11) Little Stony Creek
- (12) Bark Camp Lake

### Russell County

- (13) Big Cedar Creek
- (16) Laurel Bed Lake

### Washington County

- (14) Big Brumley Creek
- (15) Big Tumbling Creek
- (28) Whitetop Laurel
- (29) Straight Branch
- (30) Beartree Lake
- (31) Tennessee Laurel
- (32) Green Cove Creek

### Tazewell County

- (17) Little Tumbling Creek
- (18) Maiden Spring Creek
- (19) Cove Creek
- (20) Wolf Creek
- (21) Roaring Fork
- (22) Laurel Creek

### Smyth County

- (23) Middle Fk. Holston River
- (24) S. Fk. Holston River
- (25) Hurricane Creek
- (26) Comer Creek
- (27) Little Laurel Creek



For more fisheries information,  
contact the VDGIF offices  
listed below:

Richmond—804/367-1000  
Charlottesville—804/296-4731  
Williamsburg—804/253-7072  
Virginia Beach—804/424-6719 (answering machine)  
Fredericksburg—703/899-4169  
Staunton—703/332-9210  
Vinton—703/857-7704  
Marion—703/783-4860



# Trout Stocking Plan

As the 1992 trout season approaches, preparations are being made to begin stocking streams and lakes. The season will officially open at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 21, 1992 and will close on February 1, 1993.



Rainbow trout; photo by Soc Clay.

A few changes will be made in streams stocked during 1992. Slate Lick Lake in Rockingham County, Hawksbill Creek in Page County, and Little Passage Creek in Shenandoah County have been dropped due to insufficient stream mileage.

After opening day most streams will receive additional introductions of trout through May 30. The number of stockings streams will receive will vary from 1-5. Poorer quality streams will receive the fewest introductions; while better streams will be stocked more often. Most in-season introductions will occur at two to two and one-half week intervals.

Streams to be stocked are listed by county in the following table along with the last stocking date introductions will occur. Streams to be stocked during the fall are also noted.

	Spring Stocking Completed By:	Fall Stocked Streams
<b>ALBEMARLE COUNTY</b>		
Moormans River (N & S Forks)*	5/23	
Sugar Hollow Reservoir	5/30	X
<b>ALLEGHENY COUNTY</b>		
Clifton Forge Reservoir	5/30	X
Smith Creek*	4/18	
Pounding Mill Creek*	4/18	
Jerrys Run*	4/18	
<b>AMHERST COUNTY</b>		
Davis Mill Creek*	5/30	
Little Irish Creek*	4/25	
Pedlar River (Upper)	5/30	X
Pedlar River (Lower)	5/30	
Piney River (S. Fk. & Proper)	5/30	
<b>AUGUSTA COUNTY</b>		
North River (Gorge)*	5/2	
North River (Upper)*	4/18	
Mill Creek*	3/28	
Braley Pond*	5/16	
Back Creek*	5/2	
Upper Sherando Lake*	5/16	X
Lower Sherando Lake*	5/16	X
Hearthstone Lake*	5/16	X

	Spring Stocking Completed By:	Fall Stocked Streams
Falls Hollow*	4/18	
Elkhorn Lake*	5/23	X
<b>BATH COUNTY</b>		
Back Creek*	5/2	X
Pads Creek*	4/18	
Jackson River (Hidden Valley)	5/30	X
Jackson River (Rt. 623)*	5/30	X
Bullpasture River	5/30	X
Spring Run	5/30	X
Douthat Lake	—	X
<b>BEDFORD COUNTY</b>		
Hunting Creek*	5/30	
Liberty Lake	5/2	
<b>BLAND COUNTY</b>		
Lick Creek	5/16	
Wolf Creek	5/30	X
Laurel Fork Creek	4/25	
<b>BOTETOURT COUNTY</b>		
Jennings Creek*	5/23	X
North Creek*	5/23	
Middle Creek*	4/25	
McFalls Creek*	4/25	
Roaring Run	5/23	X
<b>BUCHANAN COUNTY</b>		
Dismal River	5/16	X
Hurricane Fork	4/11	
<b>CARROLL COUNTY</b>		
Crooked Creek	5/16	X
Laurel Fork Creek	5/16	X
Little Reed Island Creek	5/30	X
Lovills Creek**	3/28	
Stewarts Creek	5/9	
<b>CRAIG COUNTY</b>		
Barbours Creek*	5/9	X
North Fork Barbours Creek***		
Potts Creek	5/30	X
<b>DICKENSON COUNTY</b>		
Frying Pan Creek	5/16	
Russell Fork River (Haysi)	5/16	
Pound River	5/30	X
Russell Fork (Bartlick)	5/30	X
<b>FLOYD COUNTY</b>		
Mira Fork	4/11	
Burkes Fork	5/30	X
Goose Creek	4/11	
Howell Creek	5/9	
Little Indian Creek	5/9	X
Little River	5/16	X
Laurel Fork	5/9	
West Fork Little River	5/9	
Rush Fork***		
<b>FRANKLIN COUNTY</b>		
Greene Creek	5/9	X
Maggadee Creek	5/9	
Runnett Bag Creek	5/2	X
<b>FREDERICK COUNTY</b>		
Back Creek**	4/25	
Winchester Lake	5/9	X
Hogue Creek	4/25	
Cedar Creek	5/30	X
Paddy Run	5/2	
Clearbrook Lake	5/9	X
<b>GILES COUNTY</b>		
Big Stoney Creek*	5/30	X
Dismal Creek*	5/16	

	Spring Stocking Completed By:	Fall Stocked Streams		Spring Stocking Completed By:	Fall Stocked Streams
<b>GRAYSON COUNTY</b>			<b>ROCKINGHAM COUNTY</b>		
Big Wilson Creek	5/16		North Fork Shenandoah River	5/23	X
Middle Fox Creek	5/30		German River	4/18	
Big Fox Creek*	5/16		Dry River	5/9	
Elk Creek	5/30	X	Silver Lake	4/18	X
Helton Creek*	5/30		Shoemaker River*	4/18	
Hales Lake*	5/30	X	Briery Lake*	5/9	X
			Hone Quarry Lake*	5/23	X
<b>GREENE COUNTY</b>			Hone Quarry Run*	5/9	
Lynch River	4/4		Briery Branch	4/18	
South River	5/23	X	Slate Lick Lake*	5/2	
<b>HENRY COUNTY</b>			<b>RUSSELL COUNTY</b>		
Smith River (Dam)	5/30	X	Big Cedar Creek	5/30	X
Smith River (Lower)	5/30	X			
<b>HIGHLAND COUNTY</b>			<b>SCOTT COUNTY</b>		
Bullpasture River	5/30		Little Stoney Creek*	5/16	
Potomac River	5/16		Stock Creek	5/16	
Bullpasture River (McDowell)	5/16		Big Stoney Creek	5/16	
			Straight Fork (Lower)	5/16	
<b>LEE COUNTY</b>			Bark Camp Lake*	5/30	X
Martins Creek	5/30	X	<b>SHENANDOAH COUNTY</b>		
North Fork Powell River	5/30		Big Stoney Creek	5/30	X
<b>MADISON COUNTY</b>			Mill Creek	5/23	
Garth Run	4/11		Peters Mill Run	4/11	
Hughes River	5/30	X	Tomahawk Pond*	5/9	X
Robinson River	5/23		Passage Creek	5/23	X
Rose River	5/23		Little Passage Creek*	4/11	
<b>MONTGOMERY COUNTY</b>			<b>SMYTH COUNTY</b>		
Craigs Creek*	4/25		South Fork Holston River (Lower)	5/30	X
Poverty Creek*	4/11		Staleys Creek	5/30	
South Fork Roanoke River	5/30	X	South Fork Holston River (Gorge)*	5/30	
Toms Creek	4/25		Comers Creek*	5/16	
<b>NELSON COUNTY</b>			Hurricane Creek*	4/25	
Tye River	5/30	X	Cressy Creek*	4/4	
North Fork Tye River	4/25		Dickeys Creek*	4/18	
South Rockfish River	3/28		Middle Fork Holston River	4/18	
<b>PAGE COUNTY</b>			<b>TAZEWELL COUNTY</b>		
Cub Run*	5/9		Wolf Creek	5/30	X
Upper Passage Creek*	4/18		Cove Creek	5/30	
Hawksbill Creek	5/2		Laurel Creek*	5/16	
<b>PATRICK COUNTY</b>			Roaring Fork*	5/16	
Ararat River***			Little Tumbling Creek	5/30	
Clarks Creek	5/9		<b>WASHINGTON COUNTY</b>		
Dan River (Above Powerhouse)	5/30		Whitetop Laurel (Upper)*	5/30	X
Dan River (Below Powerhouse)	5/30	X	Whitetop Laurel (Lower)*	5/30	X
South Mayo River (North Fork)	5/9		Tennessee Laurel	5/30	
South Mayo River (South Fork)	5/9		Green Cove Creek	5/16	
Rockcastle Creek	5/30	X	Big Brumley Creek	4/25	
Round Meadow Creek	6/13		Valley Creek	4/4	
Poorhouse Creek	5/9		Big Tumbling Creek	5/30	
<b>PULASKI COUNTY</b>			Straight Branch*	5/30	
Peak Creek	5/9		Bear Tree Impoundment*	5/30	X
<b>ROANOKE COUNTY</b>			<b>WISE COUNTY</b>		
Glade Creek	5/9	X	Clear Creek*	4/4	
Roanoke River (City)	5/9	X	High Knob Lake*	5/16	
Tinker Creek	5/9	X	<b>WYTHE COUNTY</b>		
Roanoke River (Salem)	5/9		Stoney Creek*	4/4	
<b>ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY</b>			Gullion Fork Creek*	4/4	
Mill Creek	5/16	X	Gullion Fork Ponds	4/4	X
Irish Creek	5/2		West Fork Reed Creek*	4/25	
South River	5/2	X	Cripple Creek	5/16	
Maury River	5/16	X			

\* National Forest Streams

\*\* Not Stocked Preseason

\*\*\* Stocked Preseason Only



## Caution Concerning Electric Fencing

The article by Jim Bowman entitled "Steps to Fewer Deer Tracks" in the January 92 of *Virginia Wildlife* contained information concerning the use of electric fencing to protect gardens and other crops from deer damage. Readers should be alerted to the absolute necessity of utilizing an appropriate electric fence charger or rectifier for any electric fence design. **In no instance should an electric fence be connected directly to a 110-volt power supply.** Any animal or human touching this fence could receive a fatal shock. *Virginia Wildlife* would like to thank Mr. Lanny Smith of the Virginia Chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association for bringing this important clarification to our attention.

## For Kids Only

Want to catch the first trout of your life? Well, the Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU) and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries once again invite all you kids 12 and under to join in the trout fishing fun Opening Day on the Rose River in Madison County.

We make sure that three-quarters of a mile of prime trout water is well-stocked for you all, all 400 or more of you who will show up for this "kids only" event that was started 12 years ago by TU in an effort to give you a chance to catch a trout on Opening Day.

In addition, we make the stretch of the river "off limits" to adults for the whole day. Of course, you can get your adult friends to help you bait your line and carry the sandwiches for lunch down to the stream, but we don't let 'em take any of your trout from you (We know that's going to kill them, but just remind them that this is *your* turn to bring home the bacon). And landowner Jimmy Graves of Grave Mountain Lodge has graciously opened up his land which borders the stream for the day, which allows for

ample parking and plenty of access to the stream.

So, get your folks up early on Saturday, March 21, because the fun starts at 9:00 a.m. You don't need a license and you don't need a penny to fish, but you do need to bring your own tackle and bait.

Tell your parents that the stream is located along Route 670 between Criglersville and Syria. If they have anymore questions, they can call George Huber of the Rapidan Chapter of TU at (703) 923-4278 for more information. □



*Zebra mussel; photo by Lee Walker.*

## Zebra Mussel Alert

Zebra mussels are threatening Virginia's waters! An exotic species that has made its way over to the U.S. from Europe, this mussel is now seriously endangering native mussels and other aquatic life in the Great Lakes region. We must stop it from entering our own lakes and rivers!

You can help! Zebra mussels are easily transported on the hulls of boats or in live wells. If you are in an area infested with zebra mussels, be sure to thoroughly rinse your boat, trailer and boat parts and allow it all to completely dry. If you find a zebra mussel or a cluster of them, save a few in alcohol for our biologists, crush the rest and dispose of in trash. Please report all suspected sightings of zebra mussels to the Fisheries Division of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries at 804/367-1000. Be sure to read all about the threat of zebra mussels in next month's *Virginia Wildlife*. □

## Fly Fisher's Symposium

Wintergreen Resort will be hosting a Fly Fisher's Symposium on April 4 and 5 in Wintergreen, VA, with instructors such as Dick Talleur, Paul Jorgensen, Harry Murray, Steve Rajeff, Flip Pallot, and Barry and Cathy Beck leading fly fishing seminars. Over 75 exhibits by flyfishing manufacturers will be featured, along with hundreds of fly rods to examine and cast at an indoor pond, fly tying demonstrations, guides, outfitters, art, authors, videos, antique tackle, and the latest fly rods, reel and products. Show hours on Saturday are from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission is \$8/per day for adults and \$2/ per day for children under 12. For more information, call Wintergreen Resort at 1-800-325-2200. □

## Letters

### Parents Need to Get Involved, Too

Virginia Shepherd's article on the Editor's Page (*Virginia Wildlife*, Nov.) about the hunter's course, kids and parents was somewhat scary.

Hunting should be taken seriously. It's too dangerous not to be. Even though the classes may be slow at the beginning, they do get better and you finish knowing more than when you started. The most experienced hunter could probably learn something. The classes are not just for young girls and boys.

It's a shame parents can't take the time to go with their sons or daughters to a class that will make them and other people a little safer in the woods. If parents are willing to let them get a hunting license, then they should provide someone to take the course with them that has the time, is interested in hunting, and is willing to hunt with them when the season starts. Not many kids are interested in hunting, but those who are should have the opportunity to do so in a safe manner.

Melissa Wilfong  
Manassas

# Recipes

## Perch Are Delicious In Springtime

by Joan Cone

**A**long with other meanings, "perch" is applied to many smaller species of local fish, especially our native Virginia yellow perch. Also known as raccoon or ringed perch, this fish is generally six to 10 inches in length, has red or orange pelvic fins and sides marked by dark vertical bars on a green background. Widely distributed by the Ice Age glaciers, yellow perch are found from Canada to Georgia in lakes, reservoirs and rivers. They can reproduce in still water, yet continue to make large spawning runs in springtime up the Chickahominy, Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers along with the James and the Rappahannock.

Both yellow perch and the unrelated white perch (a striped bass cousin) are delicious eating and can be prepared similarly. The only difference in the kitchen is that yellow perch, difficult to scale, are generally skinned rather than scaled.

### MENU

Beer Batter Perch  
Scalloped Potatoes  
Lemon Parsley Carrots  
Fruit Slaw  
Chocolate Eclair Cake

### Beer Batter Perch

6 to 8 whole perch, skinned  
4 tablespoons margarine or butter  
1 cup biscuit baking mix  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1 egg  
1/2 cup beer

Melt margarine in a heavy skillet or electric frying pan. Combine remaining ingredients and mix until smooth. Dip fish into batter, letting excess drip into bowl. Fry at moderate heat until golden brown on both

sides and fish flakes easily when tested with a fork.

### Scalloped Potatoes

2 tablespoons margarine  
1 small onion, sliced  
1 can (10 3/4 ounces) broccoli cheese soup  
1/3 cup milk  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
4 medium potatoes, cooked and sliced

In a skillet over medium heat, in hot margarine, cook onion until tender. Add remaining ingredients and heat to boiling. Reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 5 minutes or until hot and bubbling. Serves 4.

### Lemon Parsley Carrots (For Microwave)

1 pound carrots, cut in 1/4-inch slices  
2 tablespoons water  
2 tablespoons margarine or butter, softened  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 tablespoon chopped parsley  
1/2 teaspoon fresh grated lemon peel  
2 teaspoons fresh squeezed lemon juice  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
Microwave—High Power Setting

In a 2-quart covered glass casserole, cook carrots in water until just tender (approximately 9 minutes), stirring once; drain. Stir in remaining ingredients and cook until heated through (approximately 1 minute). Makes about 3 cups.

### Fruit Slaw

1 can (20 ounces) chunk pineapple in juice  
5 cups shredded cabbage  
2 large oranges, peeled and sectioned  
1 large red apple, cored and chunked  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel  
1/2 teaspoon celery seed  
1/8 teaspoon dry mustard  
1/8 teaspoon salt

Drain pineapple, reserving 1/3 cup juice. Combine pineapple, cabbage, oranges and apple. Combine reserved pineapple juice, oil, vinegar, orange peel, celery seed, mustard and salt in a screw-top jar. Shake well. Pour over slaw. Toss several times to coat fruit and cabbage thoroughly. Makes 6 servings.

### Chocolate Eclair Cake

2 packages (3-1/2 ounces each) French Vanilla Instant Pudding  
3 cups milk  
1 container (8 ounces) whipped topping, thawed  
Whole graham crackers

Combine pudding mix and milk; mix well. Fold in thawed whipped topping and beat 2 minutes at medium speed. Butter a 9 x 13-inch dish. Place a layer of whole graham crackers in dish. Spread 1/2 of pudding mixture over crackers. Top with second layer of graham crackers. Spread remaining half of pudding mixture over crackers. Top with third layer of crackers. Pour cooled Chocolate Topping over cake. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes 12 servings.

### Chocolate Topping

1/4 cup milk  
1/3 cup cocoa  
1 cup sugar  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons margarine or butter  
1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine first 4 ingredients. Boil for 1 minute. Remove from heat and add margarine and vanilla. Cool and then pour over cake. □



# Photo Tips

## Wade in With Patience

by Lynda Richardson

**"S**LURP . . . KERSPLOSH . . .  
SLURP . . . KERSPLOSH . . ."

I'm sure the sound echoed across the river and into the next county. It was a half hour before dawn as I slogged through the thick, stinking, black slime of a mud flat. Carrying my photo blind over one shoulder and a folding chair and tripod on the other, I oozed and gooshed my way to a spot near a dilapidated old pier.

For the past few days, I'd peered through tall marsh grasses at the river's edge watching black-crowned night herons, great blue and little blue herons fishing the early morning and late afternoon low tides. I had tried to photograph them from the shore, but the long-legged waders never seemed to venture close enough for decent close-ups, even with my long telephoto lenses. But, they did get close to the pier! Everytime I arrived for my spying sessions, an egret or heron would be perched on the broken pier. So, it seemed the logical thing to do was to get near the pier if I wanted to get near the birds.

That was easier said than done. "SLURP . . . KERSPLOSH . . . SLURP." Finally in position, I situated myself so that the sun was behind me, thus lighting my subjects directly. I placed myself close enough for good, tight full-body shots with my longest lens, but far enough away so that the release of the shutter hopefully wouldn't scare the birds. Cringing, I set my immaculately clean Leonard Rue blind deep into the gooey substance. Then, I took the folded metal and plastic off my shoulder and contorted it into a chair, relishing the thought of spending the rest of the day with my feet sunk into a huge pre-cut mud pie. Yummy.

Sinking the chair into place, I then pulled my tripod from its bag, extended the bottom legs out full and pushed them down into the mud. With tripod, chair and blind in place,

I was ready for the trek back to shore for my other gear (I couldn't wait to make those attractive sounds again).

The sun was beginning to brighten my surroundings, so I slipped back through the mud, keeping watch for any birds which might try to sneak in before I was ready. True to form, the moment I picked up the equipment, a sneaky black-crowned night heron landed on the pier. Since I was shooting with Fujichrome 50 film, it still wasn't bright enough to hand hold my brutish lenses, so all I could do was watch as the ruby-eyed bird scoured the mud flats for lively hors d'oeuvres.

After a few minutes, the gear began to get heavy so I decided to go ahead and return to the blind. But, attempting to shift my weight, I suddenly realized I couldn't move my feet! I tried again but this time, almost lost my balance. *Don't panic.* I started shifting my shoes around in the muck trying to get more space around each foot when I noticed another black-crowned night heron and a great egret had arrived on the scene. Figured. Adjusting my precious load, I pulled one foot hard. And with a "KKKEEERRRSSS-PLOSH" I was freed. My company left in a raucous of squawks.

This gave me the break I needed, so I hurried (as much as I could) to the blind in hopes I'd make it before something else showed up. But, once again, I'd hardly gotten a chance to climb in when another great egret landed on the pier. Fumbling to place the camera lens combination on the tripod, I then slipped it carefully through a shooting port watching to make sure the tall white creature wasn't spooked by my actions. As I put my eye to the viewfinder and got



*This little blue heron finally was caught in the act of hunting the infamous mud flats. With patience and persistence, you, too, can overcome Murphy's law! Photo by Lynda Richardson.*

my finger to the shutter release, the great egret took that moment to fly off for parts unknown. Well, that was O.K. I had *plenty* of great egret pictures, anyway.

Well, now I had a moment to catch my breath. Before anything else arrived, I quickly organized everything in the blind. This particular blind has pockets in the walls, so I dropped in rolls of film, a light meter, notebooks, pens, and a paperback novel my mom had given me. Now, I was ready.

About an hour later, I hadn't seen anything else besides a few gulls and ski boats. The light was growing brighter and in another hour or so it would be too contrasty for good photographs. I looked down at where I thought my soggy feet would be and noticed the tide was starting to come in as well.

As is usually the case in wildlife photography, if anything can go wrong, it will. Murphy's law is equal to the sum of the laws of wildlife photography. But, it is a proven fact that by adding a large amount of patience and persistence, you can swing the laws in your favor. I didn't get any photographs that day, but the next day I went through the same ritual and it paid off. I captured images of those wily black-crowned night herons, little blue herons and cattle egrets . . . as well as a cold. □

## Cold Weather Kills

by William Antozzi, Boating Safety Officer

On April 5, 1991, Andrew Sluiter, age 42, was planning to fish from a 15-foot canoe on the James River a quarter mile below Howardsville. He tossed out an anchor in swift water. The anchor line was tied to a canoe seat and when the anchor caught, powerful current caused the canoe to capsize. Andrew perished when he fell overboard. He was a very good swimmer but the water was extremely cold and he was not wearing a personal flotation device.

On April 7, 1991, Mark Flecnor, age 28, drowned when the 10-foot aluminum jon boat he occupied filled with water and sank on the North Fork Holston River. There were two people in the boat and some gear. Overloading and improper weight distribution could have been the reason, because the boat rapidly filled with water which poured in over the stern. Mark could not swim and was not wearing a personal flotation device. The water was cold.

On April 22, 1991, Wilbur Willis, age 30, Charles Wilson, age 37 and Alexander Burrell, age 43, were fishing on the York River near the Capahosik Boat Ramp from a 10-foot jon boat. Two men decided to go swimming in the very cold water. In a few minutes they felt the effects of the cold river and called for help. The third man tried to assist but the boat capsized. No one was wearing a personal flotation device. Two were fairly good swimmers. The third could not swim. All were cold water victims.

On April 30, 1991, Lonnie Smith, age 51, was in a 12-foot jon boat on the North Fork Shenandoah River. He got too close to the foot of a dam and the dam hydraulics pulled him into the waterfall causing the boat to capsize. Lonnie Smith drowned. He was a good swimmer, but was not wearing a personal flotation device. The water was very cold.

Hunters and fishermen lose their lives every year on small boats in cold water. Many hunters use very small boats for their sport and consider them to be useful for putting out waterfowl decoys and not much else. When using small boats on cold winter water, some hunters tend to overload them. Hunting is sometimes best when the weather is worst, since foul weather pushes waterfowl in and influences them to look for a landing spot.

Hunters may spend many hours in a blind waiting for waterfowl under cramped, cold and uncomfortable conditions and fishermen may sit for hours in a small boat. Blood circulation is usually restricted and parts of the body may become partially numb. If that is the case, the sportsmen may not function as well as usual. Judgment may also be impaired and the risk of gun accidents may increase, but it is a known fact that more waterfowl hunters perish from water-related mishaps than from gun accidents.

A safety checklist is very important. The list should include items which will give the sportsman an edge in emergency situations. That list should include a complete motor check to prevent failure, and the ex-

amination should be made by someone who is competent. An inspection by an unqualified person is rather useless. Other items on the list should be running lights, horn or whistle, manual bailer, oars or paddles, visual distress signals, fire extinguisher, blanket, dry clothing in a watertight bag, flashlight, personal flotation devices, throw-cushion or ring, knife, anchor, sufficient anchor line and a starter-cord if applicable. A wetsuit is a good option.

Hypothermia can kill, and getting wet is the quickest way to start the condition. Hypothermia is a cold weather hazard and it begins when the body temperature falls below normal. A person can become a victim when the weather is wet and windy and temperature is 30 to 50 degrees. Intense shivering, thinking difficulty, reduced coordination, disorientation, muscular rigidity and drifting into a stupor are hypothermia symptoms. Wind is a big factor because it drives cold air beneath clothing. Falling into water invites rapid hypothermia.

Cold weather and its companion, cold water, are hostile to humans. With the knowledge and skills available, the environmental traps can be avoided. There is a popular saying, "know before you go" which is used as a warning. Yes, knowledge is important but it can not help much if that knowledge is not made useful by effective preparation. Perhaps it should be reworded to read: "Proper Preparation Pays." □



# Freshwater Game Fish Poster



Common Fish  
of Virginia



- 1a. Largemouth Bass
- 1b. Smallmouth Bass
- 1c. Spotted Bass
- 2a. Bluegill
- 2b. Redear Sunfish (Shellcracker)
- 2c. Rock Bass
- 2d. Redbreast Sunfish
- 3a. White Crappie
- 3b. Black Crappie
- 4a. Brown Trout
- 4b. Rainbow Trout
- 4c. Brook Trout
- 5a. White Perch
- 5b. Striped Bass
- 5c. White Bass

- 6a. Walleye
- 6b. Yellow Perch
- 6c. Muskellunge
- 6d. Chain Pickerel
- 7a. Flathead Catfish
- 7b. Channel Catfish
- 7c. Brown Bullhead
- 8a. Carp

For a full-color poster, send \$8.00 to:  
Fish Poster, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries,  
P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104.  
Please make check payable to: Treasurer of Virginia.

The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has produced a full-color 21" X 36" poster of 23 freshwater game fish in Virginia. This identification poster of fish includes large-mouth bass, trout, crappie, catfish, perch and pickerel, and can be purchased by sending a check for \$8 to: Fish Poster, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, VA 23230-1104. Please make check payable to: Treasurer of Virginia. ☐



# *Virginia's Wildlife*





# The Glossy Crayfish Snake

by Joseph C. Mitchell

**F**ifty-three years ago on October 28, 1939, the soon-to-be curator of reptiles and amphibians of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Neil D. Richmond, found two juvenile specimens of a snake never before encountered in Virginia. His family owned a farm near Lanexa in New Kent County and he spent several years in the late 1930s and early 1940s working there. Of his many contributions to our understanding of these animals in Virginia, one of the most interesting is his discovery of the glossy crayfish snake.

Glossy crayfish snakes (*Regina rigida*) are nonpoisonous, relatively small, aquatic, and found in the Coastal Plain from North Carolina to eastern Texas. They are shiny, plain brown snakes with obscure dark, narrow stripes along the back and lower sides of the body. Two parallel rows of semicircular black spots down the belly, and the dull yellow chin and upper lip distinguish this species from other snakes in Virginia. Adults reach a maximum size of about 31 inches, although most are smaller. Females bear 8-16 live young in late summer. Adults feed on crayfish, although small fish, aquatic salamanders, and frogs are known to be occasionally eaten. Juveniles presumably eat aquatic insects and their larvae. The two juveniles and five additional glossy crayfish snakes found in 1940 and 1942 were associated with freshwater marshes. Almost nothing is known of the ecology of this snake anywhere in its range.

The seven specimens Richmond collected represented an apparently unique, isolated population, and has been so recorded in the scientific literature since that time. The closest



Thought to be extinct in Virginia, Kurt Buhlmann's great find of a glossy crayfish snake in New Kent County was caught for a photograph in 1991 (opposite; photo by Lynda Richardson).  
Above: A close-up of a glossy crayfish snake; photo by R.W. Van Devender.

known population is below Albermarle Sound in North Carolina. Because no additional glossy crayfish snakes had been found since 1942, and because so little was known about the isolated Virginia population, some herpetologists suggested that this isolate should be considered extinct and no longer illustrated on maps in field guides. The recent State Committee on Amphibians and Reptiles dealt with this question and concluded that this species should be listed as Status Undetermined (see the book *Virginia's Endangered Species*). This list includes species for which too little information exists on which to make a reasonable decision about its status.

Indeed, we asked ourselves whether this species might be extinct in the Commonwealth, a question addressing a perplexing problem in conservation biology. When do you say that a species or a population is finally extinct? The usual answer is that it is declared extinct when knowledgeable biologists are convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the field surveys have been sufficiently thorough to determine that no habitat or individuals are left. In the case of the glossy crayfish snake, the committee was not convinced that suffi-

cient field work had been done to make that distinction. As it turned out, we are glad we were conservative.

In the summer of 1991, Virginia Natural Heritage zoologist Kurt Buhlmann made an important discovery. He found a juvenile glossy crayfish snake burrowing in a muskrat mound in a freshwater marsh near Lanexa. This single find confirms that this species is still alive in Virginia. It means that we should now mount field surveys to assess its current status. With reasonable field efforts, we can then determine whether or not it warrants some level of protection. Is it as rare as the original information suggests?

This story proves that declaring a species extinct or even endangered should be made with caution. One should always know the current status of a rare species before a decision is made about legal protection. Plus, Buhlmann's lucky find of a single glossy crayfish snake says that important discoveries can still be made in Virginia. □

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Joseph Mitchell is the principal researcher on a statewide reptile and amphibian survey funded by the Game Department's Nongame Program.



*Winter Comfort*  
By  
Bob Henley

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by Bob Henley

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**W**e are proud to offer wildlife artist Bob Henley's limited edition print of two red foxes in snow to our *Virginia Wildlife* subscribers. Bob Henley's breathtaking work has been featured in the February and July 91 issues of *Virginia Wildlife*, and for weeks after those magazines appeared, people called us inquiring about Bob Henley prints for sale. We realized that our subscribers weren't content to have a Bob Henley work in their magazines, they want-

ed one for their walls! And, lo and behold! Bob has allowed us to make a special offer to our subscribers. First, you can have your very own *Winter Comfort* print for \$35 when you buy two one-year subscriptions to *Virginia Wildlife*. That's a savings of \$10 off the regular price of *Winter Comfort*.

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Why not give wildlife a ride by ordering a Wildlife Conservationist license plate from the Department of Motor Vehicles? This brand-new plate, created by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, is designed to generate money for the Game Protection Fund, which is used for wildlife conservation management and research.

Order yours today by filling out the application at the bottom of the page (using the instructions on the opposite page to guide you). Show how much you care for Virginia's wildlife by purchasing a Wildlife Conservationist license plate today!



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VSA 61 (REV 7/91)



# Remember Wildlife

**W**hen you are shy and secretive and don't know the language, nobody knows when you're in trouble. We never hear a cry when we bulldoze their nesting areas, or pollute the fields or streams they feed in. We don't know what we've done until it's too late.

But you can change that. On May 1, make a donation on line 27A of your state tax return to Virginia's Nongame and Endangered Species Fund. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries established the Nongame and Endangered Species Program 10 years ago in an effort to monitor, recover,

and manage the nongame and endangered species in the Commonwealth. But, in these hard times, contributions to this program have plummeted, and vital research projects have gone unfunded. Time is running out.

We know that times are hard for you. But, what about wildlife?

*We're sending out a Mayday plea for their lives.*

